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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 40th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BURKE (Ireland)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 81: EXTERNAL DEBT CRISIS AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Draft resolution on international debt crisis and development (A/C.2.46/L.38)

1. Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.38 on behalf of its sponsors, drew particular attention to paragraphs 1, 2, 8 and 10. A solution to the international debt crisis would facilitate the growth and development of the developing countries and would, in turn, help ease the current recession. He expressed the hope that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 83: INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION (continued)

Draft resolution on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (A/C.2/46/L.39)

2. Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.39 on behalf of the sponsors, said that developing countries were particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. He expressed the hope that the draft resolution would receive the Committee's full support.

AGENDA ITEM 84: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE (continued)

(b) SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (continued)

Draft resolution on special assistance to the front-line States (A/C.2/46/L.36)

3. Mr. MUCHANGA (Zambia) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.36 on behalf of his own delegation and the following additional sponsors: Angola, Barbados, Botswana, Egypt, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Swaziland, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe. The persistent intransigence of the apartheid regime of South Africa continued to hinder the development of the front-line States; the latter considered that full responsibility for ending the violence in South Africa rested with the South African regime. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

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AGENDA ITEM 77: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued)

(a) TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/46/3, A/46/15, vols. I and II, A/46/496 and Add.1, 564, 565 and 567)

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FOR THE 1990s (continued) (A/46/566)

(h) SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/46/3 and 37)

4. Mr. PONIKIEWSKI (Poland) said that the close relationship between trade and development had led his Government to streamline its policies with a view to achieving full integration in the world economy. That move was a logical consequence of the shift to a market economy and the need to become competitive in world markets before competitiveness could become firmly rooted at home.

5. Although some countries, including many developing countries, had liberalized their trade policies, others did not allow sufficient access to products from abroad. His delegation hoped for a prompt and successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, and welcomed the commitment made in that connection by the Group of Seven at the London Economic Summit.

6. All outstanding problems relating to market access, textiles, services and, in particlar, agriculture, must be resolved if true multilateralism in world trade was to become a reality. Food exports were of primary importance to many developing countries and to the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, and overproduction by the developed countries must be reduced, allowing market forces and free competition to prevail. His country had proposed to purchase its own food surpluses, and possibly those of other nations, under the international assistance package for the Soviet Union.

7. Action was also needed to halt dumping and other illegal practices in international commerce and to establish international control in that field. Countries with economies in transition had to contend with many foreign speculators of doubtful reputation; consideration should be given to the establishment of a United Nations-sponsored information bank to provide Member States with data on such trading partners.

8. Regional economic integration should be welcomed, provided that it did not harm countries outside the region in question. His delegation reiterated the importance which it attached to the prompt conclusion of the negotiations on association with the European Community and expressed the hope that the internal difficulties faced by some members of the Community would not undermine the European integration process.

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(Mr. Ponikiewski, Poland)

9. The reforms introduced by his Government in January 1990 to stabilize and liberalize the national economy included specific measures relating to foreign trade. The abolition of the State monopoly in that area and the subsequent lowering of tariffs and non-recourse to other trade restrictions had had an unprecedented effect on the economy. Exports in 1990 had risen by 40 per cent in comparison to 1989, and while export growth had slowed in 1991, imports of foreign goods had risen by 240 per cent during the first seven months of 1991.

10. In macroeconomic terms, the Central and Eastern European States were severely handicapped by the system they had inherited. They faced two major challenges: first, the need to find new trading partners following the collapse of trade with the Soviet Union and to learn how to compete in Western markets and, secondly, the need to establish a new foundation for trade within Central and Eastern Europe and with the Soviet Union and the republics.

11. The economic transformation under way in his country ultimately would establish favourable conditions for expanded trade with developing countries. The United Nations should identify what measures were needed to improve the competitive strength of the developing countries in Central and Eastern European markets, and new opportunities for trade relations between the developing countries and the States of Eastern and Central Europe should be explored.

12. Mr. ARRIA (Venezuela) said that the fact that the developing countries lagged behind in science and technology could be attributed to international economic obstacles such as those impeding the transfer of technology and, in particular, to their own excess military spending. It was time for the developing countries to ask themselves why science and technology were not accorded the priority they required and to stop blaming their inadequacies in that area on external causes. So long as they deemed research a luxury, they would continue to lag behind.

13. The educational systems in most developing countries were largely responsible for the problem, for inadequate emphasis was placed on careers in science and technology and on relevant training for educators, and businesses and universities were not encouraged to promote research and technological development. That situation must be corrected. The cooperation of countries which were highly advanced in science and technology was also essential if the developing countries were to play a role in a world of rapid scientific and technological change in which the major innovations emanated primarily from the United States, Japan and the European Community.

14. With regard to the role of the Secretariat in the field of science and technology, his delegation believed that the achievements and orientation of the Centre for Science and Technology for Development should be objectively evaluated and, if appropriate, it should be given additional resources to carry out its work. It was also essential to ensure that the relevant bodies

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(Mr. Arria, Venezuela)

of the General Assembly took the views of experts in science and technology into account when elaborating international measures in that field. Such expertise was not, in his view, available in the Second Committee.

15. In conclusion, the developing countries should not lose sight of the excellent potential of so-called intermediate technologies that were appropriate for their needs, particularly with respect to activities directed at poverty mitigation.

16. Mr. EAFEARE (Papua New Guinea) said that the unfavourable evolution of the international economic policy environment and the continuing deterioration of the social and economic situation in most developing countries, leading in many cases to political instability, underscored the urgency of improving global mechanisms to promote the systematic coordination of international policies in the interrelated fields of trade, commodities, technology, investment, money, finance and development. Trade and development, in particular, should be more participatory and broad-based, the ultimate goal being to protect the interests of mankind as a whole.

17. The dramatic changes in Eastern Europe and the European Community programmes envisaged for 1992 prompted his delegation to wonder how those developments, as well as trends already in place, would affect world trade and the growth of the developing countries. Although many developing countries were liberalizing their trade mechanisms through structural adjustment programmes and other development policies, the developed countries were gravitating towards greater protectionism, thereby aggravating balance-of-payments problems and indebtedness and exacerbating the problems of development. The developed countries must demonstrate a genuine political will to make constructive changes in all aspects of international trade and development, including the policies of the international financial institutions which they controlled.

18. Increased export earnings for developing countries were directly related to market access conditions in developed countries, and steps must be taken to improve such access. Those included strengthening commodity markets to improve the terms of trade of the developing countries and enabling them to increase their earnings, not from the increased production of raw materials, but from the conversion of raw materials to processed goods for export. The policies of international financial institutions must be altered to encourage gradual and selective trade liberalization.

19. The developed and the developing countries therefore must foster concurrent cooperative efforts to break the impasse over differences on the liberalization of trade in agriculture and ensure the success of the Uruguay Round. That would at least increase the chances of correcting global trade imbalances and strengthening the role of GATT.

(Mr. Eafeare, Papua New Guinea)

20. The successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round was the key to injecting new energy in the global trading system. Political sacrifices would have to be made in the interests of all mankind. Full consideration should be given to the special status of the developing countries. The complete liberalization of tariff and non-tariff measures affecting market access for the exports of developing countries was a prerequisite for the well-being of mankind. Substantial progress would have to be made before the end of 1991 in order to convert the agreements on principles contained in the Punta del Este Declaration into precise legal documents for adoption by Governments.

21. Mr. BUKURU (Burundi) said that, while the United Nations had gained prestige through its activities in the maintenance of peace and security, major obstacles continued to impede its efforts to ensure free international economic relations, as evidenced by the stalemate reached in the Uruguay Round negotiations. His delegation welcomed the importance attached by the group of seven major industrialized countries to a rapid and successful conclusion to the negotiations, since the dismantling of non-tariff barriers was essential to the development of the developing countries.

22. The developing countries were following with interest the establishment of such regional commercial arrangements as the single European market and the free trade agreement between Canada and the United States, and they hoped that those arrangements would revitalize the multilateral trading system without causing the further marginalization of their own economies.

23. Noting the reference, in paragraph 22 of document A/46/496 on the needs and problems of land-locked developing countries, to a political conflict between Burundi and Rwanda, he assured the Committee that his Government had never acknowledged the existence of such a conflict and requested the UNCTAD secretariat to make the necessary corrections to the text.

24. The number of countries listed as least developed had risen steadily over the past 20 years but, despite considerable efforts at national and international levels, their economic and social situation had deterioriated. Burundi had therefore been encouraged by the unanimous adoption of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s. To succeed, the Programme should adhere to several key principles; it should be based on shared responsibility and strengthened partnership; the least developed countries should have primary responsibility for determining their development policies and priorities; adequate external support should be provided by the development partners and any commitments given should be measurable and sufficiently transparent to permit continuous evaluation of the Programme of Action.

25. Annual reviews of progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action would help ensure its effectiveness. So far, the Japanese Government had taken a welcome initiative in holding, jointly with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the Tokyo Forum on the least developed

(Mr. Bukuru, Burundi)

countries. Encouraging measures had also been taken by the United Nations system, in particular the recent decision by UNDP to assign 55 per cent of indicative planning figure (IPF) resources to such countries during the Fifth Programming Cycle.

26. The Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries had recognized the need for assistance from the international community for land-locked and island developing countries. His delegations hoped that the same spirit of solidarity would ensure smooth passage of the draft resolution on specific action to assist such countries, which would be introduced.

27. Despite the efforts undertaken pursuant to the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development and other subsidiary programmes the gap between industrialized and developing countries in terms of their scientific and technical capacities continued to widen. In 1986, the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development had substantially reoriented the activities of the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology and his delegation commended the efforts made by the Centre in the face of considerable financial and staffing constraints. The Centre had a noble role and its work was irreplaceable. In that conviction, Burundi had offered to host the twelfth session of the Advisory Committee on Science and Technology for Development in Bujumbura in May 1992 and would make every effort to ensure the success of that session, despite the country's extremely limited resources.

28. Mr. MENDEZ (Philippines) said that, although, from 1983 to 1991, export growth of developing countries had been greater than that of industrial countries in terms of volume; however, because of deteriorating terms of trade the purchasing power of their exports had declined sharply and, consequently, they had been unable to import the capital goods essential for their continued economic development.

29. The stalemate in the Uruguay Round negotiations was evidence of the control exercised by the major economic powers over the world trading process. A balanced outcome to the Uruguay Round was essential if a healthier and more efficient trading environment was to be achieved through agreements in the new negotiation areas. His delegation associated itself with the position expressed, on behalf of the Cairns Group, by Australia, opposing uncontrolled protectionism and trade-distorting subsidies which stifled the competitiveness of efficient, but unsubsidized, producers and encouraged ecologically unsound agricultural practices. Multilaterally agreed definitions, based on the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, national treatment and labour mobility, were required in the area of services. With regard to intellectual property rights, the Philippines joined other developing countries in calling for greater access, at concessional terms, to development-related technologies. In addition, there was a need for trade-related investment measures, free of distorting and restrictive effects, which recognized the important role of investments and non-debt-creating resource flows in generating employment and diversifying production.

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(Mr. Mendez, Philippines)

30. It was reassuring that some major trading powers staunchly supported a balanced and multilateral trading environment, based on the principles of equality and predictability. Such a multilateral environment would leave room for non-confrontational regional trading environments which fostered production centres with comparative advantages for a more efficient and universally beneficial exchange of goods and services.

31. Although all countries sought continued development, the need for growth and development was more critical in the poor countries. That development could be achieved only through a recognition of their initial handicap; through support for their efforts to diversify production; financial support for their export-related efforts; sharing of science and technology at preferential and concessional terms with those countries; redirection of foreign direct investment to the developing world; establishment of an interregional trade financing facility to support South-South economic cooperation and trade; support of developing country efforts to achieve sustainable development with environmentally sound policies; elimination of protectionist levies and discriminatory quotas on regional products; more rational application of the generalized system of preferences; and cancellation or drastic reduction of the external debt of developing countries.

32. His delegation hoped that the forthcoming eighth session of UNCTAD would give further impetus to the resolutions on external debt, the environment and trade financing, adopted by the Trade and Development Board at its thirty-eighth session.

33. With regard to science and technology, it was essential to promote endogenous capacity-building in developing countries, so that they could use recent scientific discoveries for the benefit of their own sustainable development.

34. Negotiations in GATT had been of assistance to many developing countries, but increased market access was not in itself enough to raise their efficiency as producers and traders. The developing countries had comparative advantages in certain areas, which could meet the needs of industrialized countries and free resources for other purposes. Helping developing countries become self-reliant and responsible partners was not so much a question of altruism, therefore, as of enlightened self-interest and it was to the benefit of the North to ensure that, in the long run, development was fostered through trade, not aid.

35. Mr. KABIR (Bangladesh) said that his country attached great importance to review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries for the 1990s. Recent developments, such as the Gulf crisis and various natural disasters of unprecedented scale, had clouded the short-term economic outlook of most least developed countries, further hampering their growth and development. The cyclone which had struck Bangladesh earlier in 1991, causing massive human losses and extensive economic damage, and the

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(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

recent widespread flooding in the country, had highlighted the continuing vulnerability of least developed countries to natural disasters.

36. Notwithstanding those hardships, those countries had started implementing fundamental policy reforms, as they had pledged to do at the Paris Conference. Economic reforms had gone hand in hand with a positive evolution towards transparency and democracy in their political governance. Democracy had been restored in Bangladesh, whose people were now working to build a prosperous society on the solid foundation of equity, justice and respect for human rights.

37. Those positive actions were not, however, in themselves sufficient to ensure successful implementation of the Programme of Action. To break the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment, it was necessary both to increase the flow of official development assistance (ODA) and also to stimulate such non-debt-creating flows as foreign direct investment. Sustained action was also necessary to deal with the growing debt-service burden. Bangladesh appreciated the significant debt-relief measures implemented by a number of its development partners and fully supported the proposals on debt relief submitted by the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

38. Increased access to developed markets was also essential to reactivate growth in the least developed countries. The proposals submitted by them to the Uruguay Round on further concessions for their exports had included measures to safeguard the degree of concessions and special dispensation for least developed countries with regard to trade-related investment measures (TRIMs), the trade-related intellectual property system (TRIPs) and services.

39. Full advantage must also be taken of the follow-up and implementation mechanisms established at national, regional and global levels to monitor progress in those areas. Bangladesh welcomed the importance attached by UNCTAD to the least developed countries, evidenced by the decision to upgrade the unit on such countries to a division. Valuable initiatives had been taken by Japan and by Italy, the Netherlands, Finland and Norway to contribute to the advancement of those countries. In addition, Bangladesh commended the increased interaction between UNCTAD and other organizations, particularly the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The willingness of the regional commissions to focus on operational strategies and specific measures in favour of the least developed countries would help meet the challenges posed by implementation of the Programme of Action.

40. Bangladesh regretted the disappointing response to the recommendation in the Programme of Action that overall funding of the United Nations Capital Development Fund should be increased by 20 per cent a year over the 1990s and to the UNDP appeal to development partners to mobilize resources for the Special Measures Fund for the Least Developed Countries (SMF/LDC). In addition, his delegation believed that the travelling costs and per diem of at least one least developed country representative to the spring session of the

(Mr. Kabir, Bangladesh)

Trade and Development Board should be defrayed, as very few such countries were represented in Geneva.

41. Concerted efforts were required by the entire international community to meet the commitments given at the Paris Conference, to ensure a better future for the teeming millions in the least developed countries.

42. Mr. SOUMPHOLPHAKDY (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that his delegation was pleased with the overall arrangements for the implementation, follow-up, monitoring and review of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s. While the primary responsibility for development of a given country lay with that country, national policies would have little chance of success without a favourable external environment. In that regard, a substantial increase in ODA was crucial to the development of the least developed countries. His delegation commended the countries members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) for achieving - and, in some cases, even surpassing - the target of setting aside 0.2 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) for assistance to the least developed countries, and hoped that other countries would endeavour to meet that target by the end of the decade.

43. In spite of the significant debt-relief measures taken in favour of the least developed countries over the past few years, the debt burden of many of them continued to pose a major obstacle to their efforts to carry out adjustments and reactivate development. Serious consideration should be given to improving and widening the scope of existing debt-reduction schemes through the cancellation of ODA debt and the alleviation of commercial debt and debt-servicing obligations to official creditors and multilateral institutions.

44. In order to integrate the least developed countries in the international trading system and to promote their self-reliance, market access for their exports must be substantially improved. Measures in favour of the least developed countries should be taken in such areas as the duty-free treatment of their exports, exemption from quotas and ceilings, and the use of simplified and flexible rules of origin.

45. As a land-locked least developed country with a structurally weak economy, the Lao People's Democratic Republic had few resources for developing its basic infrastructure, and international financial and technical assistance was absolutely essential. In that respect, his delegation called upon its development partners to implement fully the Paris Declaration and Programme of Action of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in order to contribute effectively to the development efforts of the least developed countries.

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46. Mr. MAYORGA CORTES (Nicaragua), referred to the note by the Secretary-General on strengthening international organizations in the area of multilateral trade (A/46/565) and said that the Protocol of Provisional Application was not sufficient to ensure the effectiveness of GATT. Under that Protocol, the rights and obligations of contracting parties related more to their national trade policies than to the kind of larger international compromise originally envisaged. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX), UNCTAD had been considered merely a transitional mechanism pending the establishment of an International Trade Organization. Moreover, the statement by the Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD had stressed debt and financing of development, sustainable development, technical cooperation and implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries with a view to redefining the role of UNCTAD at the forthcoming session in Cartagena.

47. Recent positive developments on the political scene had not been fully reflected in international economic cooperation. Imbalances in the international economic and trade situation persisted and, for the third consecutive year, the average annual growth rate of developing countries had declined in real terms. The prices of non-fuel commodities had plunged to their lowest level since the 1980s and the terms of trade had steadily worsened for developing countries. International trade had grown by only 4 per cent in 1990, compared to 7 per cent in 1989. Beyond a lack of political will or failure to agree on agricultural policy, the general frustration which prevailed at the Uruguay Round could be traced to a structural deficiency in GATT - namely, the absence of any mechanism for enforcing agreements between contracting parties.

48. Despite unilateral concessions made by the developing countries under their structural adjustment programmes, the goal of a truly open and equitable multilateral trading system had yet to be achieved. Nicaragua and other countries had substantially reduced their import tariffs. Nicaragua had also dismantled State monopolies on exports and entered into bilateral free trade agreements with Mexico and the United States. It attached the greatest importance to the multilateral trade negotiations under the Uruguay Round. Should the negotiations fail, Nicaragua's economic recovery and restructuring process would be seriously impaired; were that to happen he could not guarantee that the recently agreed measures would remain in place over the long term. Ideally, the Uruguay Round should result not only in the strengthening of GATT but also in the conclusion of supplementary agreements on external indebtedness, development financing, international economic adjustment and monetary cooperation.

49. The forthcoming eighth session of UNCTAD would provide an excellent opportunity to evaluate the objectives, shortcomings and potential of UNCTAD and determine how it could be transformed into a more effective mechanism for North-South cooperation. His delegation hoped that the "negotiation strategy" and its annotated agenda, recently proposed by the Director-General of GATT to the Trade Negotiations Committee, would result in simultaneous negotiations in

(Mr. Mayorga Cortes, Nicaragua)

the seven negotiating committees and agreements in principle by the end of November. It welcomed the broad range of options and proposals which had resulted from the consultations by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD; they could be considered at Cartagena. The eighth session would also provide an opportunity for reflecting on the future of GATT and UNCTAD itself. If those institutions could not be strengthened, it might be more realistic to establish a modern version of the international trade organization contemplated in the Havana Charter. Even the European Community and Canada had proposed the establishment of a multilateral trade organization in the Uruguay Round. The topic had also been debated in the Economic and Social Council.

50. Mr. SINGH (India) expressed the hope that the eighth session of UNCTAD would produce concrete results and enrich the development dialogue. Many developing countries had instituted sweeping reforms of their trade systems in an effort to vanquish their traditional enemies of poverty, ignorance and underdevelopment. In that context, it was disappointing to see that protectionism was on the rise in developed countries. The developing countries also feared that the formation of regional trading blocs might encourage a so-called "fortress approach" and actually increase protectionism. For that reason, the developing countries attached great importance to a trading system based on rules, discipline and the concept of mutual benefit. His delegation hoped for a balanced conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations - one which would guarantee market access for the products of developing countries, support their technological and public interest needs, and encourage budding service sectors. Developed countries must also assist commodity-dependent developing countries in their efforts to diversify their economies. The increase in the development finance requirements of developing countries, the global savings crisis and fuller utilization of the world's production potential were issues which could be explored in considering the Secretary-General's proposal for an international conference on development financing.

51. As the date of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development approached, developing countries were concerned that environmental preservation could become a pretext for imposing new conditionalities on trade. Science and technology for development was a dominant theme in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and yet the future of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology and other subsidiary bodies was uncertain. While existing bodies, including the Intergovernmental Committee, the United Nations Fund for Science and Technology for Development and the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development were of immediate interest to developing countries they had not always been effective. The situation of developing countries had not changed significantly since the adoption of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development. The endogenous capacity-building efforts of developing countries and their ability to absorb far-reaching new technologies were hampered by an adverse external environment. Developing

countries had to cope with far-reaching new developments while at the same time fulfilling their primary responsibility of meeting the basic needs of their populations. For them, even the acquisition of environmentally sound technology was prohibitively expensive. Coordinated and harmonized United Nations activities to address those problems had been one of the major objectives of the Vienna Programme of Action and could be effectively carried out by the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development. In that connection, he wished to mention the conferences on environmentally sound coal technologies sponsored by the Centre, one of which India would host. It was unfortunate that disagreements over technology transfer and intellectual property were delaying the adoption of an international code of conduct on the transfer of technology. As the South Commission Report had emphasized, science and technology were the shared heritage of the world's people and should be disseminated as widely as possible, if necessary, by subsidizing the acquisition of technology by developing countries. Adequate financing of the Centre for Science and Technology within the multilateral framework was also vital. His delegation had contributed regularly to the United Nations Fund for Science and Technology for Development and urged all countries, particularly the developed countries, to do likewise.

52. Mr. MAMFOUMBI (Gabon) said that the current session of the General Assembly provided an excellent opportunity to evaluate General Assembly resolution 45/201 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/52, and to finalize a strategy in anticipation of the eighth session of UNCTAD. Those deliberations would take place against the backdrop of an unpredictable and adverse international economic climate and the current stalemate in the negotiations under the Uruguay Round. The seven industrialized nations had yet to honour the commitments they had undertaken at the London Economic Summit, which would, inter alia, remove obstacles to trade in sectors such as agriculture and textiles, and would also remove obstacles to the diversification of exports. That was an area in which developing countries, particularly African developing countries, spared no effort. The Uruguay Round negotiations must lead to cohesive measures in support of national development efforts. They must also guarantee free trade on the basis of clear rules, so that the developing countries could benefit from their economic reforms.

53. As the UNCTAD session drew near, efforts must be made to increase the availability of high-quality goods and services on the markets of developing countries. The session itself should reassess the international trading system and explore the linkages between trade and other economic sectors which played a role in the economic transformation of developing countries. His delegation hoped that the agenda of the UNCTAD session would also include an item on the serious economic problems of African countries, stressing sustainable development, the equitable distribution of resources, and a more favourable international economic environment. As most developing countries were dependent on their exports, they had suffered greatly from the decline and instability in commodity prices. A concerted effort must therefore be made to reverse protectionist trends and distortions in commodity trading.

(Mr. Mamfoumbi, Gabon)

54. Despite the efforts made by the developing countries to apply structural adjustment policies, credit worthiness had not improved and they were finding it increasingly difficult to obtain new money. In conclusion, his delegation supported the establishment of an international trade organization, in the spirit of the Havana Charter, to compensate for deficiencies in GATT and UNCTAD.

55. Mr. PIZARRO MACKAY (Chile) said that vigorous efforts must be made to ensure the success of the Uruguay Round since a significant group of developing countries, which had made tremendous sacrifices to adopt a free-trade system, were looking forward to the reduction of discriminatory trade practices. Unless the developed countries took measures to ensure the full operation of free-market mechanisms, all the efforts of the developing countries would be in vain. It was hard to understand how the industrialized countries could justify their reluctance to open their markets on the grounds that they needed to protect certain sensitive productive sectors. Those arguments also held true for the developing countries, whose economies as a whole were fragile.

56. The developing countries required a favourable economic environment in order to meet their growth targets and promote sustainable development. Such an environment must be based on a well-defined and equitable system of rules that allowed countries to participate in world trade without exceptions or exclusions. While some industrialized countries had made commendable efforts to adapt their sectoral policies to the requirements of the ongoing multilateral trade talks within GATT, it was essential to speed up work to conclude specific agreements.

57. The integration of the countries of Eastern Europe into the international trading system might divert resources from the South. The countries of Eastern and Western Europe were united by historical and cultural ties that were likely to lead to closer relations, including resource flows in the form of aid and investment. While that was a positive process, it should be borne in mind that there was a major difference between the countries of the South and those of the East. The countries of the South required assistance in order to develop, while the economies of Eastern Europe, while severely depressed, were already industrialized. Resources should therefore be apportioned in such a way as to meet the different requirements of each group of countries without favouring one over the other. While the integration of the countries of Eastern Europe into the world economy could lead to new export opportunities for the developing countries, adequate measures would have to be taken to ensure that those countries actually reaped the benefits of that situation.

58. In order to achieve sustainable development and to protect and preserve the environment, developing countries required scientific and technological assistance. North-South cooperation in the area of science and technology must be increased, and scientists from developing countries should be given

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(Mr. Pizarro Mackay, Chile)

the opportunity to participate in the development of new technologies in the industrialized countries. That would ensure that new advances took account of the realities in the developing world, particularly, the need for technologies that generated employment and did not replace human labour by machines. The specialized agencies of the United Nations system had an important role to play in drawing up and implementing programmes in the area of science and technology, and they should continue their work, taking into account the specific requirements of the developing countries.

59. Mr. McDONALD (Commission of the European Communities) said that, since the mid-1980s, both developed and developing countries had benefited from positive developments in trade. One of the most encouraging developments had been trade with Central and Eastern Europe, where growth in imports to the European Community from those countries had increased substantially. Imports to those countries from the Community had increased considerably. While exports from Eastern Europe to the countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) had also shown a substantial increase, exports to other major trading partners had not been so positive and, in some cases, had declined. The Community was currently negotiating far-reaching "association" agreements with its Eastern European neighbours with a view to promoting free trade, and it hoped that it would soon be able to establish a schedule for dismantling trade restrictions.

60. The Commission of the European Communities looked forward to the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round by the end of the year. The European Community was currently considering fundamental reforms in its common agricultural policy, which would be facilitated by a balanced and comprehensive outcome of the multilateral trade negotiations. However, it was difficult for the Community to make a greater effort in that area without the cooperation of its partners.

61. The eighth session of UNCTAD would provide an opportunity for constructive dialogue and a discussion of the interrelated issues of good management, sustainable development, structural reform, trade, resources, technology and services and commodities. It would also be an occasion to review the role of UNCTAD in trade and development matters and to consider institutional improvements to increase the effectiveness of its activities.

62. The European Community had made improvements in its trade regime, for example, with regard to the Lomé Convention and under the generalized system of preferences (GSP). It had granted special GSP concessions in order to help the Andean Pact countries increase their exports. In 1992, the Community would conduct a major review of its GSP scheme.

(Mr. McDonald)

63. The European Community had taken measures to offset the major trade problems of the 1980s. It had improved the operation of the System of Stabilization of Export Earnings (STABEX) and had increased the funds available to it. Recognizing that commodities continued to be an important source of export earnings for many developing countries, the community had made an offer on tropical products at the Uruguay Round that should be of substantial benefit to developing countries.

64. Growth of trade would depend to a large extent on increased investment, and the problems of the growing demand on available capital, shortage of savings, the debt problem and the need to revive growth in some developing countries on a sound economic basis, would have to be considered. The European Community continued to work towards greater predictability and continuity in the world economy through a balanced mix of non-inflationary, monetary and fiscal policies, which had resulted in more sustainable growth and a stabilization of its exchange rates in the context of the European Monetary System.

65. The European Community supported the need to reinforce institutional arrangements in the area of international trade and, on 9 July 1990, it had submitted proposals to GATT concerning the establishment of a multilateral trade organization. The implementation of those proposals could take place only in the existing structure, namely GATT, and must be linked to the substantive outcome of the Uruguay Round. Consequently, it would not be possible to finalize those institutional arrangements until the Round had been concluded.

66. The eighth session of UNCTAD would provide an opportunity for considering ways to strengthen the role of the Conference in trade and development matters. The roles of GATT and UNCTAD were, and should remain, complementary. GATT would continue to be the forum for the negotiation and administration for contractual arrangements, while UNCTAD would continue to play an important role in analysis, consensus-building and consideration of policy approaches, in addition to its other functions. It would, of course, be essential to maintain adequate coordination between the activities of those two institutions. Both GATT and UNCTAD had shown an impressive capacity for adjustment and adaptation, and the strengthening of the multilateral trade system would facilitate coherence between policies in trade and other areas of economic policy at the national and international levels.

67. A salient feature of the Uruguay Round had been the active integration of the developing countries. In recent years, several important developing countries had negotiated their accession to GATT, thereby expressing their confidence in the system. GATT also made important allowances for the weaker developing countries which were rarely called upon to make substantial trade concessions but which none the less benefited from the GATT rules that provided for special and differential treatment of developing countries.

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68. Mr. LEV (Israel) said that issues such as trade, development and the international monetary system could be dealt with only at the international level. Consequently, failure to achieve progress at the Uruguay Round and the upcoming eighth session of UNCTAD would have adverse consequences for countries that were most vulnerable to changes in the external economic environment. Israel, a country with a small domestic market and almost no primary commodities, had been forced to develop an export-oriented economy that depended heavily on the human factor. Those two elements - exports and human resources - had been increasingly recognized as essential for the development of any national economy.

69. The increasing interdependence of the world economy would make it necessary for international forums to deal with more complex and wide-ranging issues. The recent shifts of emphasis in approaches to economic systems should bring about changes in the work of the Organization and, in particular, enhance the role of UNCTAD in promoting appropriate trade policies at the regional and national levels. UNCTAD should endeavour to develop appropriate policies that fostered both broad sustainable development and the sustainable development of trade. Much more could be learned from the experiences of countries that were at an inter iate stage of development. His delegation hoped that the current round of negotiations in GATT and the forthcoming eighth session of UNCTAD would contribute to a more balanced, open and free global economic system. Israel would contribute its utmost for the achievement of that goal.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-SIXTH SESSION
Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
41st meeting
held on
Wednesday, 13 November 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 41st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BURKE (Ireland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 77: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (*continued*)

(a) TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (*continued*) (A/46/3, 15, vols. I and II, 496 and Add.1, 564, 565 and 567)

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FOR THE 1990s (*continued*) (A/46/566)

(h) SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (*continued*) (A/46/3 and 37)

General debate

1. Mr. HUSSEIN (Malaysia) said that the 1991 report by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and other documents pointed to a further slowing of world economic growth. The impact of that trend on the developing countries was compounded by the high inflation rate, falling commodity prices and the failure to resolve the debt problem. The Gulf war had also had severe consequences. The efforts of the developing countries to restructure their economies had thus been undermined by the unfavourable international environment. At the same time, the seven major industrialized countries were moving towards a more managed world economy, with the aim of strengthening their already privileged position.

2. With regard to commodities, the developing countries no longer benefited from the support they needed in order to be able to diversify their economies by improving the processing, marketing and transport of their commodities. In addition, the only commodity agreement currently in force was the International Natural Rubber Agreement.

3. Trade liberalization and increased direct foreign investment were necessary for the creation of an international economic climate conducive to the revitalization of the economies of the developing countries and the resumption of growth in general. The reforms implemented by the developing countries had not led to increased official development assistance (ODA) flows or loans granted by commercial banks. In 1990, while ODA flows had totalled $US 47,000 million, the developing countries had made debt service payments totalling some $US 173,000 million.

4. The developing countries could not undertake essential structural adjustments without an improvement in the net transfer of resources, nor could they diversify their economies unless the developed countries offered markets for their manufactured goods.

5. The outcome of the Uruguay Round appeared uncertain, as the negotiations on agricultural products were currently deadlocked. In 1990, the countries of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) had reportedly subsidized agricultural exports to the tune of nearly $US 300,000 million. Clearly that situation was not beneficial to anyone.

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(Mr. Hussein, Malaysia)

6. It was therefore crucial for the Uruguay Round to be successfully concluded by early 1992 at the latest. The results should give equal consideration to the interests of both developing and industrialized countries, since a reduction in tariff and non-tariff barriers could substantially increase the volume of trade. The success of the Round depended on the political will of the Governments of industrialized countries. They should recognize the concessions made by the developing countries. The current Round was the first time that the developing countries were actively participating in negotiations in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and any failure, at the current stage, would be disastrous. It was essential to put an end to protectionism, and a number of developing countries had mustered the courage to liberalize their own economies and trade systems.

7. The resolutions of the eleventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development (A/46/37), and particularly the provisions to ensure the participation of developing countries in international cooperation for research and development of environmentally sound technologies, merited the attention of the General Assembly. Efforts should be made to facilitate the transfer of technology to developing countries, to strengthen their endogenous capacities in science and technology, thereby enabling them to undertake research and development and to choose the technologies most appropriate to their needs and resources. In particular, environmentally sound technologies should be freely accessible to all countries.

8. Environmental protection was expensive, and additional funds should be available to developing countries on a regular, predictable and assured basis to enable them to tackle environmental problems both at national and at local levels.

9. Malaysia fully subscribed to the need for full implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development adopted in 1979, and supported the establishment of a United Nations financing system for science and technology for development, as envisaged in the Vienna Programme of Action and proposed in the Declaration of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 at their fifteenth annual meeting held in September 1991 in New York.

10. Mr. LEE (World Health Organization (WHO)) said that, in its resolution WHA/44.24 of May 1991, the forty-fourth World Health Assembly had called upon the Director General of WHO to intensify efforts to support those countries in greatest need of assistance in strengthening their health systems. That resolution was an expression of the growing concern over the deteriorating health situation in many developing countries.

11. That deterioration was undoubtedly due, on the one hand, to the total lack of financial resources and, on the other, to the many weaknesses in the organization and management of health services and in the information and coordination systems. Those difficuties had prompted the new initiative aimed

(Mr. Lee, WHO)

at enhanced cooperation, undertaken by WHO to intensify its support for those countries in greatest need, without restricting it to the least developed countries. That initiative was based on a country-by-country approach and on close cooperation both within WHO and with other international development organizations and the development agencies of the industrialized countries: countries must re-evaluate their health priorities and the resources available for health. Countries would be assisted in accordance with their needs; that would necessitate flexibility and pragmatism, and the pursuit of short-term and long-term objectives. An extensive review of the economic factors influencing opportunities for health development together with the development by each country of a policy framework would make it possible to deal with issues which had received inadequate attention in previous international cooperation efforts. That should lead to national health development plans which were better integrated, better coordinated and better adjusted to available human and financial resources. Twenty countries were participating in that initiative and a further 10 requests had been received. For its part, WHO undertook to make more efficient use of its technical and financial resources and to mobilize additional resources to meet the priority needs of those countries.

12. Mr. MEGUME (Uganda) said that the report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD (A/46/496 and Add.1) contained a very useful analysis of the problems facing land-locked developing countries together with appropriate recommendations. Higher import and export costs meant that land-locked countries found it difficult to compete in the global market-place. Indeed for many land-locked countries the cost of transport represented on average more than 25 per cent of their export earnings, compared to an average of 5 per cent for developing countries as a whole. The result was higher prices for consumers and a low return on investment for producers. Given the impact on the balance of payments and terms of trade, it was extremely difficult for land-locked countries (many of which were also LDCs) to generate the resources necessary for their socio-economic development. Substantial resource flows and other international measures were urgently required to help them deal with their transit and transport problems at the national and subregional levels.

13. The countries of East Africa (Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda) had established subregional or corridor transmit regimes for rail and road transport. Institutional arrangements had been put in place for the northern (Mombasa) and central (Dar es Salaam) corridors, and the formation of a subregional airline was proceeding satisfactorily. It was important to emphasize, however, that heavy resource outlays were required for the construction and maintenance of new road and rail infrastructures.

14. Recognizing the importance of basing its development strategy on economic integration at the regional and subregional levels, his Government entirely agreed with the Secretary-General of UNCTAD that land-locked countries should focus on increasing local value added before export. Indeed, the Government's medium-term plan was based on the local production of high-value, low-bulk exports and the substitution of local products for low-value, high-bulk

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(Mr. Megume, Uganda)

imports. Needless to say that new strategy would necessitate increased investment in infrastructure and, as a result, much more financial support, preferably at concessional rates.

15. UNCTAD and the United Nations development system could play a critical role in the areas of research, comparative analysis and resource mobilization, and the Secretary-General of UNCTAD should strengthen his capacity to identify and analyse certain critical areas with regard to the problems of land-locked countries. There was also a need for interregional exchanges of information and experience. Such studies would be all the more useful if subregional economic groupings and national experts and policy makers from land-locked and transit countries were involved.

16. The Secretary-General should be in a position to provide the General Assembly, at its forty-eighth session, with an indication of the resource levels and other international measures required to deal with the specific problems of land-locked countries. Accordingly, the General Assembly should, at the current session, authorize the Secretary-General to initiate discussions between the parties concerned with a view to devising specific proposals.

17. Mr. KERDPHOL (Thailand) said that Thailand had been a member of UNCTAD since its inception in 1964 and had always supported its objectives. In looking forward to the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to be held in 1992, his delegation envisaged the adoption of new measures for revitalizing economic growth in the developing countries.

18. Every year Thailand provided assistance to the least developed countries in order to promote the development of human resources. In 1990 such assistance had been valued at $750,000.

19. With regard to land-locked countries, Thailand had recently concluded an agreement with the Lao People's Democratic Republic giving preferential tariff treatment to some of its agricultural products and simplifying procedures for cargo transit. A scholarship programme for students from that country had also been instituted. In addition, Thailand had been providing assistance to international organizations and United Nations specialized agencies in the transportation of cargo to be used in development programmes in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

20. Since the Australian delegate had extensively covered the question of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations in her statement on behalf of the Cairns Group, of which Thailand was a member, it would suffice to note the great importance of the current Round, which related to issues of universal scope. For that reason the developing countries were alarmed by the number of impasses besetting the negotiations.

(Mr. Kerdphol, Thailand)

21. An open multilateral trading system was of great importance to the developing countries and to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. If the Round could not be concluded successfully in a timely fashion, the result would be a retreat to protectionism and bilateral trade arranagements. His Government believed that both developed and developing countries must work together to achieve a balanced world monetary system.

22. Thailand, which had recognized the importance of science and technology in national development since the early 1980s, had included provisions for scientific and technological advancement in its five-year plan for the period 1982-1986. Since that time its interest in such questions had continued to grow. Efforts had been made to strengthen indigenous technological and scientific capabilities, by, inter alia, establishing a national center for genetic engineering and biotechnology and a national electronics and computer technology centre. Science and technology would be given high priority in the seventh national development plan (1992-1996), with a particular focus on the development of human resources, the use of appropriate technology to increase productivity, and the development of a science and technology infrastructure. In that way his Government hoped to use science and technology to sustain its economic growth rate, promote equitable distribution of income, conserve natural resources and protect the environment.

23. His delegation welcomed the work done at the United Nations in formulating a draft international code of conduct on the transfer of technology. Technological advancement was one of the factors that was widening the gap between the North, where research and development institutions were concentrated, and the South, which had little opportunity to participate in such ventures, but whose economies bore the brunt of their negative impact.

24. Mr. MATRI (Pakistan) thanked the Secretary-General for his statement made at the thirty-eighth meeting of the Second Committee, concerning the convening of an international conference on money and finance for development. The success of the efforts by developing countries to carry out their development plans depended on increased trade and access to adequate financing. Renewed economic growth in the developing countries would be impossible unless the flow of capital for development financing was increased.

25. In his report to the eighth session of the Conference, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD pointed out that the 1980s had seen the most serious setback for the development process for more than three decades and that more than two thirds of the developing countries had experienced a decline in per capita income, often by more than 20 per cent, during the current decade. The deteriorating financial and trading position of most developing countries in the 1980s had been due to an unfavourable external economic environment characterized by the net transfer of resources from developing countries to developed countries, high interest rates, depressed commodity prices and increased protectionism in the OECD countries.

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(Mr. Matri, Pakistan)

26. Trade was a key element in the development process because export earnings made funds available for development purposes. Furthermore, the access of the products of developing countries to external markets determined their ability to borrow capital and service their debt. Free trade was therefore essential for the economic recovery of the developing countries.

27. Although the developed countries owed their economic success to free trade, unfortunately, their own trade policies were restrictive. There was an increasing reliance on "managed trade" and a "result-oriented" trade policy. A substantial portion of international trade was governed by protectionist policies applied to products from developing countries.

28. The steep fall in commodity prices in the 1980s had dealt a severe blow to many developing countries that relied almost exclusively on commodities for their export revenues and the LDCs had been the most seriously affected. Furthermore, the developed countries sought to limit imports of agro-industrial products through quantitative restrictions, taxes, countervailing duties, licensing and prohibitions. Tariffs on imports from developing countries were usually higher than those on imports from developed countries. Further, the terms of trade of developing countries played a critical role in development; and trade liberalization was bound to have a positive impact in the economic field.

29. The international community's willingness to work together for a wide-ranging and diversified restructuring of the international trading system had been demonstrated in September 1986 in Uruguay. The developing countries, whose main concern was to ensure the integration of the development dimension into the trading system, wanted the outcome of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations to be balanced and equitable. Developing countries must be given preferential treatment and accorded most-favoured-nation status in all areas of negotiations. In the new areas, they should be able to use policy instruments to ensure access to the technology needed to achieve their development objectives. The success of the Uruguay Round depended on the readiness of some developed countries to reach agreement, particularly on agriculture.

30. Lastly, as the Secretary-General of UNCTAD pointed out in his report, it was a source of concern that the cost of the transition in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe was likely to be considerably higher than expected and that the developing countries might suffer because of that. Nevertheless, there was much talk about the new opportunities for the developing countries after the collapse of ideological barriers and Pakistan earnestly hoped that those new opportunities would benefit all the countries in the world.

31. Mr. SANGA (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the Tokyo Forum on the least developed countries, organized by the Government of Japan and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), after the adoption of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, had helped to maintain the momentum generated by the Paris Conference. It had highlighted

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(Mr. Sanga, Tanzania)

the serious problems affecting the LDCs because of the increased competition for capital as a result of recent events in the world, including natural disasters and the changes in Eastern Europe.

32. The Paris Declaration and the Programme of Action adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries served as the principal documents for mobilizing the resources needed by those countries to free themselves from poverty through self-reliant development.

33. Although the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action (A/46/566) indicated that some measures had been taken to implement the Programme, much remained to be done. The Programme of Action must be fully implemented.

34. The UNDP Governing Council had decided to earmark 55 per cent of its resources for the indicative planning figures of the LDCs during the fifth programming cycle. That decision indicated the Governing Council's recognition of the plight of the LDCs. Other United Nations agencies, such as UNCDF, had similar intentions but were faced with resource constraints. For that reason, the Paris Conference had invited the relevant national authorities to consider further encouraging the work of the Fund and increasing its overall funding by 20 per cent annually over the 1990s. He hoped that Member States would heed that call.

35. The new criteria proposed by the Committee for Development Planning for categorizing the least developed countries had been prompted by the new thinking regarding the allocation of aid by donors. The analysis of the real problems and needs of the countries concerned would not necessarily override such considerations as the policies of those countries. Reforms of national policies, desirable as they might be, should remain a national prerogative and serve the interests of its own people, rather than those of the aid donors. His delegation hoped that the new criteria would create new impetus for increasing the resources needed by the least developed countries.

36. Lastly, his country expressed appreciation to the Government of Japan for putting forward the idea of holding a summit conference to address the problems of Africa in Tokyo in 1993. That would provide another opportunity for the world community to focus on the plight of the African LDCs.

37. Mr. MONGBE (Benin) expressed the hope that the Committee's deliberations would lead to the adoption of a balanced resolution on the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s.

38. At the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Paris in September 1990, the international community had acknowledged the failure of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1980s. The General Assembly had already recognized, at its eighteenth special session (April-May 1990), that the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (1981-1990) had been an

(Mr. Mongbe, Benin)

unfortunate experience, in the sense that most of the objectives that had been laid down had not been achieved. It had been said that the decade was "a decade lost for development" as far as the least developed countries were concerned, for the gap between those countries and the other developing countries had widened, while their economic situation had grown steadily worse: absolute poverty had become widespread, the nutrition and food security situation had deterioriated, educational standards had declined to a disturbing degree, employment opportunities had shrunk and the health situation had worsened. In spite of the dismal results of the first Programme of Action, his delegation remained optimistic with regard to the 1990s, due to the initiatives taken during the past year and, in particular, the organization in May 1991, on the initiative of the Japanese Government and UNCDF, of the Tokyo Forum. Participants in the Forum had acknowledged that efforts must be made by the least developed countries themselves, but also that the international community should make sufficient resources available to revive productive and income-generating activities. In that connection, the least developed countries had noted with satisfaction the recent decision of UNDP to devote 55 per cent of its resources to such countries during the fifth programming cycle.

39. In the Paris Declaration, the competent national authorities were invited to consider further encouraging the work of the United Nations Capital Development Fund and increasing its overall funding by 20 per cent a year over the 1990s; it was to be hoped that Japan, which had participated in organizing the Tokyo Forum, and the international community as a whole would spare no efforts in meeting the needs of UNCDF.

40. His country had no difficulty in accepting the new criteria for identifying the least developed countries which the Committee for Development Planning of the Economic and Social Council had proposed for adoption by the General Assembly. It would be advisable, however, to allow countries which had been taken off the list of the least developed countries to enjoy a special status for a five-year period to facilitate the transition. In fact, economic performance might be slowed or reduced to zero, or a natural disaster might cancel out the achievements of several years in a matter of hours.

41. His delegation was prepared to negotiate with other delegations on any draft resolution on agenda item 77 (b) with a view to its adoption by consensus.

42. Mr. MOTA SARDENBERG (Brazil) said that at the present time the United Nations had a unique opportunity to reorganize the international system by strengthening the multilateral approach in all areas. It was in that context that discussions were taking place on the establishment of a new international order. Vague as it still was, the very idea of a new international order expressed certain fundamental principles.

43. First of all, economic progress was the most propitious soil for the growth of democracy. It was thus essential to allocate a greater share of the

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(Mr. Mota Sardenberg, Brazil)

world's financial resources to international cooperation for development and economic prosperity.

44. Furthermore, while the new international order was predicated on greater East-West understanding, it should also be based on North-South dialogue. Brazil associated itself with the efforts being made to introduce the new world order.

45. The international economic and social situation required urgent corrective measures. The needs of the majority of mankind could not continue to be neglected. In the new international order, human dignity would form part of the right to development, both for the individual and for society.

46. The "peace dividend" should be put to good use, for it opened up opportunities for multilateralism, economic cooperation and democracy. The issue of the military expenditures of developing countries was often mentioned in that connection. Demands for reductions in such expenditures were now being addressed indiscriminately to all developing countries, irrespective of the level of their military spending, their gross national product, size or population.

47. The contemporary world was marked by distortions and imbalances which hindered development efforts. The erosion of the multilateral trading system was a case in point, for the share of the developing countries in world trade had declined steadily as a result of the protectionist and discriminatory measures of certain countries. It was important that the Uruguay Round negotiations should reach an early conclusion. Furthermore, foreign investments in developing countries had fallen, despite the efforts towards liberalization made by many such countries, including Brazil.

48. As to external debt, it was to be feared that, for the next 10 years, the debt burden would militate against any concerted effort to promote economic growth. A political solution was therefore required in order to reinstate the developing countries in the international financial system and to ensure the debt-servicing capacity of the debtor countries.

49. Referring to science and technology, he said that, 12 years after the Vienna Conference on Science and Technology for Development, the expected expansion in technology transfer had not materialized. The obstacles were attributable not only to the private sector but also to Government policies. However, unless they had a scientific and technological capability, the developing countries would be unable to ensure their development. They needed to have access, in particular, through an innovative concept of intellectual property rights, to new and environmentally benign technologies introduced in the industrialized world.

50. Transnational corporations played a critical role in that regard, since they were at the forefront of modernization and were able to devote substantial resources to introducing effective and "clean" technologies and

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processes. As with the promotion of entrepreneurship, that entailed substantive efforts to strengthen national capacity through training and the establishment of scientific institutions. The developing countries could then generate their own technologies and adapt technologies from abroad.

51. The biggest challenge confronting the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session was the revitalization of the North-South dialogue. The results of the previous 30 years had been somewhat disappointing. The dialogue must start on a new basis, and old quarrels should not be allowed to interfere. Governments, international organizations and, undoubtedly, private firms, must cooperate in order to bring about economic and social development, which was an essential element of international peace and security and support for democratic institutions.

52. Brazil would spare no effort to achieve that goal, and welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal for an international conference on development financing. As long as social and economic disparities between countries remained, there could be no justice or democracy.

53. Mr. RAICHEV (Bulgaria) said that the work of the Trade and Development Board had once again highlighted the fundamental importance of an international trading system that took into account the growing interrelation between trade, finance, foreign direct investment and globalization of economic activity. That notwithstanding, prevailing economic trends were still characterized by a general decline in basic economic indicators and world trade imbalances. Furthermore, the burden of foreign debt was overwhelming the economies of many countries and the lack of liquidity was even more acute. Under such conditions, UNCTAD could make a unique contribution to the elaboration of long-term strategies and the establishment of equitable international economic relations.

54. His delegation supported the view that non-tariff barriers were, at present, the main obstacle to international trade liberalization. The steps taken by the developed countries to grant most-favoured-nation status to Central and Eastern European countries contributed to liberalization efforts, and his delegation did not agree with the view expressed by some delegations that granting those countries access to the generalized system of preferences would be detrimental to developing countries. His delegation was firmly convinced that extending preferential treatment to new countries could only contribute to the improvement of the international trading system, and that it was rather premature to think that exports from Central and Eastern European countries would affect those of developing countries. On the contrary, the speedy integration of Eastern Europe into the world economy would create new mutually beneficial possibilities for economic cooperation with developing countries.

55. There was a growing tendency towards trade regionalization. The unification of European markets was well under way and other similar projects were being carried out in other regions of the world. It was important,

(Mr. Raichev, Bulgaria)

nevertheless, to adhere to the spirit and principles of multilateralism and non-discrimination. The conclusion of the Uruguay Round was, therefore, vital to the fair and equitable development of international trade. With regard to interregional cooperation, the steps taken under the Rules for Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (EDIFACT) were very useful.

56. The Trade and Development Board had adopted a number of important resolutions and decisions, particularly concerning sustainable development and debt and development. His delegation shared the view that sustainable development should be an important cross-sectoral issue on the agenda of the eighth session of UNCTAD and that use of environmentally sound technologies was an essential component of any successful sustainable development strategy. As for debt, all parties had a responsibility to implement economic reforms aimed at sustainable growth and development.

57. In its transition to a market economy, Bulgaria was facing serious difficulties, the most challenging one being how to achieve structural adjustment and integration into the world economy. The reforms in progress were being hindered by growing internal and external debt, budget deficit, deteriorating terms of trade and disintegration of traditional trade relations. Nevertheless, the macroeconomic reforms were based on a solid social consensus.

58. The sweeping price reform, which had been under way since February 1991, was aimed at eliminating virtually all restrictions on producer and consumer prices. The new foreign exchange system was moving towards convertibility of the national currency. Import permission requirements and export restrictions had been virtually abolished, except for certain essential foodstuffs and commodities. At the same time, agreements with former member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) were being phased out gradually and trade would henceforth be conducted at world market prices in convertible currency. Finally, new tax policies should decrease the budget deficit, and public expenditure would also be significantly reduced. However, since those reforms should not be undertaken to the detriment of social programmes, measures had been taken to achieve economic stabilization and to control inflation and efforts were being made to stem the drop in productivity and the growth in unemployment.

59. Many problems remained, resulting inter alia from the dissolution of CMEA, shrinking markets in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and the Gulf crisis. The combined effect of all these economic shocks represented about 13 per cent of the GDP for 1991. Foreign exchange reserves must be replenished in order to meet large debt obligations. In the medium term, Bulgaria hoped to restore the external trade balance by promoting exports and restraining domestic demand. Stabilization and structural adjustment efforts were critically dependent on assistance provided by private sector creditors, multilateral institutions and foreign Governments. His delegation emphasized the importance it attached to the negotiations it was conducting with a view to joining GATT.

(Mr. Raichev, Bulgaria)

60. Science and technology were a major factor in the overall development process. His delegation attached particular importance to the transfer of environmentally sound technologies essential to sustainable development. That issue should receive more attention. Endogenous capacity must also be developed.

61. For countries in transition, the decline in scientific and technological research was critical. His delegation was pleased to note that, according to the Director of the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development, the role of that sector in countries whose economies formerly had been centrally planned must be redefined in order to make the best use of their existing creative capacities.

62. Mr. MORET (Cuba) said that prospects for the developing countries had never been so gloomy. All the data collected by international organizations showed that developing countries' share of world trade was continuing to decline, as was their purchasing power and their ability to obtain the funds needed for development.

63. That would be the background for the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), in which so many developing countries were placing their hopes. It was there that the developed countries should undertake to start a dialogue that would open the way to comprehensive negotiations and endeavours for strengthening the functions of UNCTAD as the world body responsible for studying economic policies and development problems. In that respect, Cuba fully supported the Ministerial Declaration and the positions adopted at the coordinating meeting of Latin American and Caribbean countries held recently at Caracas. The consultations due to take place after the Uruguay Round concerning the creation of an international body to deal with trade issues would undoubtedly have repercussions for UNCTAD. It was essential, therefore, to confirm the mandate of UNCTAD as the organ responsible for implementing the political decisions on trade and development adopted by the General Assembly.

64. The developing countries had supported the Uruguay Round with the aim of establishing a new, fairer and more open international trading regime, so as to promote the growth of all the participating countries. But after four years of negotiations, and despite the liberalization measures adopted by developing countries, most of the principal industrialized countries, far from condemning restrictive policies, were themselves engaging in illicit unilateral practices. In flagrant violation of their commitments under the Punta del Este Ministerial Declaration, they were challenging the principle of preferential treatment for developing countries. In fact, what some of them wanted was a legal basis for limiting the capacity of third world countries to use new technologies, restricting their access to markets and preventing them from deciding how to use foreign investment in the light of their development priorities, while strengthening their own privileged position as the main providers of services.

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(Mr. Moret, Cuba)

65. The Uruguay Round should result in a return to multilateralism, respect for commitments to dismantle protectionist measures, and the inclusion of the agricultural sector in the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) through the progressive elimination of export subsidies. Market access must be improved, particularly for tropical products. It was essential for the Uruguay Round to produce satisfactory agreements based on the Punta del Este objectives.

66. The United Nations Charter provided expressly that the Members of the Organization should refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. The General Assembly, in six resolutions, had expressly regretted the use of economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries. The parties to GATT had undertaken in the Ministerial Declaration of 1982 to refrain from using restrictive commercial measures for other than economic purposes. It was generally recognized that, apart from their effects on the countries concerned, such sanctions were generally detrimental to efforts to establish an open and non-discriminatory international trading regime. Certain developed countries did not hesitate to exercise political pressure through the use of economic instruments on sovereign third world States, taking advantage of the weight they carried in the world economy. That was the case with the United States of America, which had long imposed an economic, commercial and trade blockade against Cuba.

67. The General Assembly, in its resolution 44/215, had instructed the Secretariat to pursue the matter. The note submitted by the Secretary-General on the subject showed that the Secretariat had done little to carry out that task and had not been in a position to produce the information requested, let alone formulate recommendations. It was to be hoped that the Secretariat would take the necessary steps to implement the resolution, without delay.

68. Mr. MOZHUKHOV (Belarus) said the debate showed that the international community understood the growing interdependence between, on the one hand, trade liberalization and normalization of international trade relations and, on the other, sustainable development that showed respect for the environment and focused on society. It also demonstrated how necessary it was to strengthen the multilateral nature of international trade and economic relations.

69. Belarus welcomed UNCTAD's efforts to increase the contribution of United Nations bodies to strengthening economic and trade cooperation between developed and developing countries and among developing countries, and to the solution of other, global, trade and development problems.

70. But there was still much to be done in that field. Many delegations were rightly concerned about the persistence of protectionist trends in trade, the debt problem of developing countries, international financial instability and the widening gap between developed and developing countries. Those problems

(Mr. Mozhukhov, Belarus)

could, to a large extent, be resolved in the framework of the competent international bodies. Indeed, many of them were on the provisional agenda of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. In adopting its decisions, the Conference should take account of the provisions of the Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its eighteenth special session, the International Development Strategy and the decisions of the recent United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. Belarus would be taking an active part in the preparations for and work of the eighth session of UNCTAD, and would follow the Uruguay Round negotiations with interest. It would be useful to develop constructive interaction and complementarity of the economic mechanisms of the United Nations and other international economic bodies, such as GATT, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In that connection, he hoped that the ministerial meeting on those questions which was due to take place in December 1991 would strengthen the multilateral trading system, to the benefit of all countries.

71. Belarus noted with satisfaction the growing interest of the international economic, trade and monetary bodies in the economic changes taking place in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and appreciated their wish to help those countries in the transition period. Their integration in the world economy was particularly important because they would then be able to take a more active part in world trade and economic development. In particular, they would be able to give increasing aid especially to the least developed countries. It was against that background that Belarus viewed the plan of action recently drawn up by OECD, the other decisions taken at high level and the signature of an agreement between IMF and the Soviet Union. The recent agreement on economic association between the new sovereign States of the former Soviet Union also opened up new possibilities.

72. Several points had to be emphasized in connection with the current reforms in Belarus. First, at the same time as political pluralism was gaining strength - there were about 20 parties and movements - there was a trend towards economic pluralism. That was creating social tensions, but for the time being all the resulting contradictions had been resolved smoothly. Second, radical changes in economic relations were proceeding at a steady pace. The Government was striving to move gently and to avoid excessive shocks to economic relationships or lowering living standards, particularly of the least favoured groups. Much had been done during the past year to establish the legal framework and the economic and social infrastructure for the transition to a market economy. In that connection, more than 40 laws had been passed. At the same time, practical measures had been taken: creation of a national bank, and the establishment of a commercial banking network and closer economic contacts between producers and their partners abroad.

73. Third, on 18 October, Belarus had signed the multilateral agreement of economic association between the new sovereign States of the old Soviet Union. Progress continued to be made towards the formulation of a joint

(Mr. Mozhukhov, Belarus)

economic policy in different fields - the entrepreneurial spirit, markets for goods and services, transportation, data processing, customs, monetary policy, etc. The sovereign republics were striving to accelerate economic reforms and to avoid aggravating the crisis.

74. Fourth, Belarus advocated the creation of a single economic area, a common market and the application of a common economic policy based on reciprocal confidence and responsibility. The most important issues were monetary policy, external economic relations and the settlement of the debt of the Soviet Union in accordance with the principle of collective responsibility.

75. Fifth, the agreement provided for independence in regard to coordination in the field of foreign investment and the regulation of economic activities abroad, etc.

76. On the issue of the most-favoured-nation system, Belarus considered that the system should be applied to a growing number of States, including Belarus. It could be granted first in respect of goods and services needed to cope with the consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe: specially favourable bilateral systems for the purchase of food for children, medical supplies and specialized equipment for the population which had suffered the consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe.

77. The delegation of Belarus would participate in the preparation of the draft resolution on trade and development with a view to achieving a resolution which would make a practical contribution to resolving the complex interdependent problems of multilateral trade relations in the interest of all States.

78. Mr. ABDENNEBI (Tunisia) said that the statement by the representative of Ghana had been made on behalf of the Group of 77 and therefore reflected the views of his delegation.

79. The current year had been marked by profound change on the international political scene, and it was to be hoped that it would witness the long-awaited conclusion of the Uruguay negotiations. The current international trading system created great difficulties for the developing countries, particularly because of persistent protectionism, voluntary restrictions on exports and the creation of regional trading blocs. Such obstacles hindered the participation of the developing countries in international trade and jeopardized their programmes of economic restructuring. Exports were a substantial source of revenue for those countries, enabling them not only to service their debt but also to finance development, and accordingly represented a definite factor of prosperity.

80. The conclusion of the Uruguay negotiations and the eighth session of UNCTAD should lead the way to a new era of understanding and solidarity and to a system of international trade which should be open, equitable and profitable for all, particularly the developing countries. The following four elements

(Mr. Abdennebi, Tunisia)

were essential. First, the developing countries must be allowed to share fully in the benefits deriving from production, the sale and exchange of goods, technical services and information. Second, multilateralism must be adopted in terms of the rigorous application of the most-favoured-nation principle and the principle of non-discrimination, the prohibition of market sharing or trade restrictions, an equitable and effective system for the settlement of disputes, an assurance that free trade and economic integration arrangements between developed countries would not jeopardize the trade of the developing countries but on the contrary would stimulate the flow of trade, and lastly an assurance that the developing countries would benefit from the integration of the economies of Eastern Europe into the world trade and financial system. Third, an effort must be made to establish basic rules which would assure a system of international trade based on competition; that would imply the will to abolish protectionism and any tariff or non-tariff barriers which would limit access for exports from the developing countries to the markets of the developed countries, the conclusion of international arrangements which would guarantee access for the developing countries to key technology on preferential terms and give those countries access to information networks and distribution chains. Fourth and last, there must be a commitment to forge international trade into a tool which would respect the environment without on the other hand permitting the use of environmental arguments to justify protectionist measures, and equally a commitment which would ensure remunerative prices for commodity exports.

81. If, as a consequence of a broad political will, those conditions could be met, an effective contribution would have been made towards the building for future generations of a really better world in which the interdependence of nations and solidarity between peoples would no longer be empty words.

82. Mr. AHMIA (Algeria) said that his delegation fully endorsed the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77. The recent upsurge of protectionism against the products of the developing countries was a matter of concern to the latter, which looked forward more than ever to the establishment of a just and equitable trade system which would take account of their interests, particularly in the form of preferential access for their exports to the markets of the North. In that connection there could be no argument with the relevance of the report of the South Commission when it had emphasized that the principle that the developing countries should be granted differential and more favourable treatment should be respected.

83. The eighth session of UNCTAD would certainly represent a decisive stage with respect to the will of the international community to comply with the commitments which it had made under the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the developing countries and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade.

84. There was now an urgent need for trade cooperation at the regional, subregional and interregional levels. Algeria was working for the

(Mr. Ahmia, Algeria)

establishment of a common market of the Maghreb which would make it possible for the subregion to meet many of today's challenges. At the regional level, it was working for the creation of an African cooperation area and welcomed the adoption of the Treaty Establishing an African Economic Community, signed in June 1991. It would spare no effort or resource to strengthen cooperation between the Arab world and Africa. At the interregional level, it was working to strengthen cooperation between the Maghreb and Europe. The meeting held in October 1991 in Algiers between the countries of the western Mediterranean and those of the Maghreb and the Brussels meeting between the European Economic Community and the Arab Maghreb Union had made it possible to lay new foundations for cooperation between the Maghreb and Europe.

85. The internal changes which Algeria had undergone in recent years mirrored the profound aspirations of Algerian society and its concern for democracy, and could not fail to promote stability and cooperation in the region. The difficult but necessary reform policy which Algeria had undertaken reflected the maturation of its economic experience, and sought to reactivate its productive machinery and to stimulate growth and development while preserving the social gains which had benefited the most disadvantaged sectors of the population.

86. The innovative legislation Algeria had adopted was intended, in the long term, to develop human resources and to promote exports, private initiative, entrepreneurship, competitiveness and competition, the liberalization of prices and exchange rates, and foreign investment. Various partnership formulas were being considered for attaining the last-mentioned goal, and new legislation governing the influx of foreign capital - for example, in the area of hydrocarbons - was currently being elaborated.

87. Those structural reforms were occurring in a particularly unfavourable international economic climate, at a time when the burden of external debt and debt service was increasing, sources of external financing were running out, the terms of trade were constantly deteriorating and the transfer of technology and access to markets were giving rise to difficulties. Despite all those problems, Algeria firmly intended to pursue its course.

88. The preceding decade, which had rightly been called a lost decade for the economic growth of developing countries, had been particularly disastrous for the least developed countries (LDCs). While there had been 31 LDCs at the time of the first Paris Conference, their number had now grown to 41 and was continually increasing. At the beginning of the 1980s, the LDCs had trusted that their status as such was only temporary, but they were now all too aware that it was not.

89. During the preceding decade Africa, which was where three quarters of the LDCs were to be found, had opted for a courageous economic recovery programme bearing witness to the African countries' determination to take their development and economic growth into their own hands. However, it had to be acknowledged that that objective had not been reached despite the great

(Mr. Ahmia, Algeria)

sacrifices made by the African countries. Notwithstanding the high social and political costs of structural adjustment policies, the commitments made by the international community had not, utlimately, been honoured and external support had fallen far short of what had been anticipated at the time of the programme's adoption.

90. The objectives of the new programme adopted by the international community for the 1990s, which was very ambitious, could not be met unless lessons were drawn from the failure of the first programme and unless the necessary follow-up and evaluation machinery was set up to keep attention focused on Africa's legitimate concerns in the context of the rapidly growing recognition of global interdependence.

91. As a new world came into being, the strengthening of multilateral cooperation became more essential than ever. The international community must step up its efforts to help the developing countries escape from the impasse in which they were trapped. The interdependence of nations meant that all of humanity had a common destiny.

92. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had thus concluded its general debate on agenda items 77 (a), (b) and (h).

Draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.22 on strengthening international organizations in the area of multilateral trade

93. Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.22 on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the purpose of the draft was simply to promote the implementation of General Assembly resolution 45/201.

Draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.23 on science and technology for development

94. Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana) introduced the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77. Recalling that the importance of science and technology to developing countries had already been stressed in an earlier statement by the Group of 77, he said that the resolution sought to mobilize assistance from developed countries and international organizations to strengthen the capacities of developing countries in that area. The Group of 77 hoped that the Second Committee would adopt the draft resolution.

AGENDA ITEM 80: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.40 on international cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries

95. Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77, recalled that the need for emergency mobilization of international aid to combat poverty had been recognized in the debate on agenda item 80. The resolution called for measures to eradicate that scourge.

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AGENDA ITEM 84: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE (continued)

(b) SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.42 on special assistance to Yemen

96. Mr. MISSARY (Yemen), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.42, said that Yemen should be added to the list of sponsors, along with Costa Rica, Ecuador and Honduras. For various interrelated reasons, Yemen was plagued by social and economic difficulties. The Republic of Yemen, established in 1990, had inherited two very fragile governmental structures whose vast differences had complicated the problems arising from their merger. Moreover, the country had been hit by an unprecedented series of natural disasters, whose effects had compounded its economic difficulties in the aftermath of the war between Iraq and Kuwait, which had caused the Republic of Yemen to suffer financial losses on the order of $1.6 billion. Remittances from abroad, which had been the country's main source of income, had diminished, and neighbouring countries had reduced their assistance. The great influx of returning expatriates - 1 million people, or about 8 per cent of the population - was giving rise to serious absorption difficulties in all areas: housing (about 50,000 returnees were living in camps), employment (particularly in view of Yemen's high unemployment rate), education, health services and all other essential services. It was urgent to find a solution for the refugees and returnees driven from the Horn of Africa. The resolution called for assistance to help Yemen deal with the influx of refugees and returnees; in view of its humanitarian nature, it should be adopted unanimously.

Draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.46 on emergency aid to the Philippines

97. Mr. GUERRERO (Philippines), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.46, said that Barbados, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Germany, Haiti, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom and Zambia wished to join the list of sponsors.

98. His country traditionally had a policy of self-sufficiency. However, after the series of disasters it had suffered, it was in need of international aid. He thanked the many countries which had already provided generous assistance.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-SIXTH SESSION
Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
42nd meeting
held on
Friday, 15 November 1991
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 42nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BURKE (Ireland)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 86: TRAINING AND RESEARCH: UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH (A/46/482, 619 and 624)

1. Mr. AHMED (Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs) said that the Secretary-General's report on training and research (A/46/619) provided the latest information on the current financial situation of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the sale of UNITAR headquarters property. According to the report, the level of government contributions to the General Fund in 1991 had continued to decline and the Institute had been able to operate only through another steeply increased advance from the United Nations. By the end of 1991, the total debt of the Institute would amount to approximately $10 million. Moreover, the outcome of the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities provided no grounds for renewed optimism, since the announced pledges to the General Fund for 1992 amounted to only $237,000.

2. As a consequence of the depressed real estate market in New York City, the Secretariat had been unable to find a suitable buyer for the UNITAR property on terms that would meet the conditions set by the General Assembly. In its resolution 43/201, the Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to sell that property in order to enable the Institute to repay the amounts currently owed to the United Nations and use the balance to establish a reserve fund for the Institute. Even if those conditions were not to be met, it would still not be in the best interests of the Organization to sell the property in the light of prevailing market conditions.

3. Those developments confirmed that, in spite of its restructuring measures, the Institute had not succeeded in overcoming the crisis of confidence that had affected its functioning and, to all intents and purposes, had reached an impasse that could be overcome only through immediate, bold and imaginative steps.

4. In the light of the Institute's untenable situation, the Secretary-General had expressed the view that the policy recommendations of the high-level independent consultant provided a general framework which offered the best, if not the last, opportunity to place UNITAR on sound and durable foundations. The specific observations of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/46/619, paras. 33-37) underscored the urgency of initiating and implementing a transitional process that could lift the clouds of uncertainty that had further compounded the difficulties of the Institute.

5. Mr. DOO KINGUE (Executive Director, United Nations Institute for Training and Research) said that, in spite of the restructuring of UNITAR in 1986 and 1987, the Institute's major problem continued to be the financing of its General Fund budget. Because of the quality of its training and research programmes for developing countries, UNITAR had had no difficulty in

(Mr. Doo Kingue)

mobilizing extrabudgetary resources for the funding of such programmes. Since those extrabudgetary resources, called Special Purpose Grants, were more than double the resources of the General Fund budget, the Institute's financial crisis related only to the General Fund.

6. The Institute currently had 30 full-time professionals, four of whom were financed by the General Fund; the remaining 26 full-time professionals included 11 staff members funded through extrabudgetary resources, 7 full-time Senior Fellows appointed by the Secretary-General, and 8 other full-time Fellows appointed by the Executive Director of UNITAR. In addition, the Institute made use of consultants, part-time Fellows and interns whose services were available to UNITAR at no cost to the General Fund budget. The Institute's human resources were, consequently, much greater than the four professionals provided for under General Assembly resolution 42/197. Considering the special status of UNITAR within the United Nations and the facilities available to the Institute, there was no other United Nations institution that could successfully perform the functions of UNITAR on the same scale with such a limited General Fund budget.

7. The Institute organized a wide range of training activities both for developing countries only and for all permanent missions. Those activities, some of which lasted as long as six months, included orientation courses for new members of permanent missions or for new representatives in the General Assembly or new members of the Security Council; training courses in multilateral diplomacy for nationals of developing countries; joint United Nations/UNITAR training courses in international law; joint UNITAR/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) training courses in environment and natural resources management; training courses in debt management organized in cooperation with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF); training courses in the management of disaster-relief programmes for African countries; and training courses in international cooperation for journalists in developing countries. In addition, the Institute assisted Governments of developing countries, at their request, in the establishment and operation of training institutions for diplomats and other specialists in international cooperation. In 1991, UNITAR had conducted 49 different training programmes that had benefited 1,618 trainees. Those training programmes, which had had a total duration of 438 days, had been held in New York, in Geneva and at 18 other venues.

8. The aim of the Institute's training programmes was professional enhancement. Since the participants were generally middle- and high-level government officials, the duration of the training courses could not be similar to that of university courses. However, during the past four years, UNITAR had been cooperating with some European and United States universities for the purpose of providing courses in multilateral diplomacy. At the request of the United Nations Staff Union, the Institute had organized a special training programme for staff members preparing for the examinations

(Mr. Doo Kingue)

for promotion from the General Service to the Professional category. Two years earlier, the Secretary-General had requested the Institute to design a training programme in peace-making and peace-keeping; thanks to a Special Purpose Grant from a United States foundation, that programme would soon begin.

9. In keeping with the relevant General Assembly resolutions on the restructuring of the Institute, UNITAR research activities were being funded through Special Purpose Grants and at no cost to the General Fund budget. Research was conducted by UNITAR full-time Senior Fellows, experts funded through extrabudgetary resources, and full-time Fellows. The Institute's research focused on ways and means of enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations and also on some aspects of energy matters in which UNITAR had played a pioneering role in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The results of research activities were used in training, as appropriate. The Institute also undertook research on training with a view to developing its training activities.

10. The Institute's publications provided the international community with useful reference materials on many aspects of multilateral diplomacy and international cooperation, such as human rights, international law, conflict resolution and international administration. Several UNITAR publications had been the result of partnerships with United Nations agencies or the private sector. The Institute's publication activities paid for themselves through the sale of UNITAR publications both within and outside the United Nations bookshops network.

11. In the 26 years of the Institute's existence, not more than 55 Governments had made voluntary contributions to the General Fund in any given year while UNITAR, since its establishment until the end of 1990, had trained some 13,200 specialists from 173 States and Territories and from United Nations agencies, university institutions and non-governmental organizations. In addition, some 8,000 people had participated in the Institute's research seminars and nearly 16,000 people had attended international conferences and round tables sponsored by the Institute. It was paradoxical that many Governments that were ready to make use of the Institute's services were not prepared to contribute to the funding of its operations. Following the restructuring of the Institute, the 1991 General Fund budget amounted to only $US 1.5 million, or half of the 1983 budget. At the same time, the number of people being trained by UNITAR had increased substantially.

12. Half of the Institute's debt to the United Nations was related to the purchase of the land on which the UNITAR headquarters building was situated. If that land had not been purchased, the Institute would have found it difficult to continue to occupy the building in two years' time, since the cost of renting the land and the relevant real estate taxes would have been excessive. There was, therefore, no need to regret the purchase of the land since both the land and the building situated on it were valuable assets that more than covered the Institute's debt to the United Nations.

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13. The other part of the Institute's debt constituted accumulated deficits and expenditure arising from the restructuring of the Institute, the settlement of disputes related to the management of the Institute before he had become Executive Director, and the operation of the Institute itself. At least 140 Governments participated regularly in the Institute's activities, although only some 30 Governments were paying for the functioning of the Institute. The fact that virtually all Member States requested and received UNITAR services was ample evidence of their confidence that the Institute could carry out its programmes in the interests of all.

14. Mr. BLANCHARD, speaking in his capacity as independent consultant, said that, as he had indicated in his report (A/46/482, annex), a restructured UNITAR would have a special role to play in providing training for officials and personnel involved in international cooperation, for United Nations and specialized agency staff, and for personnel involved in peace-keeping operations. The Institute conducted training programmes in areas that were dealt with, at the international level, by several specialized agencies or, at the national level, by several ministerial departments. For example, in the field of environment, UNITAR cooperated not only with UNEP but also with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Moreover, the Institute, in particular its Geneva-based office, had the capacity to prepare and implement successfully training programmes that benefited a large number of Member States. Another positive aspect of the Institute's training activities was the neutrality of UNITAR. Those were some of the reasons why UNITAR should not only be maintained but should continue to expand its training activities and training-related research.

15. The Institute should be more active in training international civil servants to cope with the increasing responsibilities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. The experiment being carried out at the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin at the initiative of a large number of international institutions, including UNITAR, perhaps marked the beginning of concerted action by international organizations to improve the quality of their staff. It also marked the beginning of a partnership between New York, Geneva and Turin, which would benefit the United Nations system in general and the developing countries in particular.

16. The Institute's pilot project in the area of peace-keeping should be implemented as soon as possible. The outcome of the project would enable the Secretary-General to decide which unit of the United Nations system should be responsible for training personnel for peace-keeping operations.

17. The report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (A/46/624) was reassuring in so far as ACABQ approved the idea of re-examining the terms of reference, programmes and budgets of all research and/or training institutes with aims similar to those of UNITAR. However, it seemed that the restructuring of the Institute would depend on the

(Mr. Blanchard)

results of that exercise, which might require a considerable amount of time; in the meanwhile, UNITAR might cease to exist altogether.

18. In paragraph 8 of its report, ACABQ indicated that, before a firm decision on the future of UNITAR was taken, it would be necessary to determine the extent to which the various agencies and organizations in the United Nations and the United Nations system would be willing and able to support UNITAR, both in terms of a restructuring of their own programmes and a willingness to contribute to the Institute's financial support, possibly through a redeployment of training and research resources. However, he had not suggested that UNITAR should be the coordinating body for the training activities of the United Nations system. On the contrary, UNITAR should engage in intersectoral and inter-agency vocational training, and the reforms that he had proposed would help strengthen the working relationship between UNITAR, its partners, in particular the specialized agencies, and its clients.

19. If the General Assembly was in favour of the continued existence of a restructured UNITAR, it would have to ensure that the Institute received a minimum amount of stable resources. In that regard, the proposed budget allocation of $2 million for the Institute's General Fund was only a little more than twice the size of the advance that the United Nations would have to give the Institute in 1991. That was a good reason to redouble efforts to improve the Institute's financial situation once and for all by establishing a precise timetable for reforms that would enable UNITAR to fulfil its mandate.

20. Mr. MAJOOR (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, said that those States welcomed the major thrust of the recommendations in the independent consultant's report. In considering the restructuring of UNITAR, the objective should be to increase its effectiveness and retain those functions which fulfilled the needs of the States Members of the United Nations, particularly those of the developing countries. The Institute's research activities should be restricted to those which were relevant to its training activities. The consultant's suggestion that the terms of reference, programmes and budgets of all research institutes with similar aims should be re-examined (A/46/482, annex, para. 8) should be pursued, and the option of merging some of them should not be ruled out. In the meantime, coordination between such institutions should be improved.

21. The consultant's recommendation that UNITAR should concentrate more on training activities and, in particular, should focus on international cooperation, peace-keeping operations and the training of United Nations and specialized-agency staff was valuable. The subject should be explored in further consultations with the relevant bodies and organizations. A full inventory of existing training activities in the fields of international cooperation, peace-keeping and economic and social development would be very helpful in that connection.

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(Mr. Majoor, Netherlands)

22. The activities carried out by UNITAR at Geneva were, in general, more comprehensive than those pursued in New York. The consultant's recommendation that such activities should be concentrated at Geneva and that a small branch office should be maintained in New York was useful, although the financial and other implications required clarification. The members of the European Community agreed that a restructured Institute could be headed by a less senior official. The review of other staffing could wait until agreement had been reached on the future role of UNITAR.

23. The States members of the European Community hoped that the restructuring of UNITAR would encourage Member States to resume or increase their voluntary contributions to the Institute. They wished to know the budgetary implications of the recommendation that UNITAR should be allocated $2 million annually from the regular budget of the United Nations.

24. On the question of how to resolve the Institute's debt to the United Nations, the Community believed that the suggestions that additional floors should be added to the building or that a larger building should be constructed to house a number of permanent missions were unrealistic and would complicate the Institute's financial situation even further. The Secretary-General's suggestion that the United Nations might rent the office space made available if the Institute moved to Geneva was more realistic. The States members of the European Community believed, however, that the building should be sold as soon as the local real estate market had improved sufficiently.

25. In conclusion, the States members of the European Community invited the Secretary-General to formulate a set of operational measures for the restructuring of UNITAR on the basis of the consultant's recommendations, in close consultation with the relevant United Nations bodies and Secretariat departments and in collaboration with the Board of Trustees of UNITAR. Appropriate transitional measures should be undertaken in the meantime.

26. Mr. GUERRERO (Philippines) said that, despite the difficulties UNITAR had faced over the years, it had made very valuable contributions to the United Nations. His delegation agreed with the independent consultant that serious thought should be given to making UNITAR a part of the United Nations University and to ways and means whereby it could repay its debt to the Organization. His delegation further agreed that the Institute's research activities should be limited to areas where UNITAR had a comparative advantage, namely, training-related programmes and projects, particularly those not adequately covered by the research divisions of the specialized agencies, and that its training activities should be limited to the areas of greatest need, a number of which were indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/619). Furthermore, the United Nations should pay UNITAR for the training activities carried out for its benefit.

(Mr. Guerrero, Philippines)

27. His delegation also endorsed the consultant's recommendation that a specific allocation from the United Nations regular budget should be granted to a restructured UNITAR, in order to avoid the defects of the current voluntary contribution mechanisms. Lastly, it emphasized that any future plans for UNITAR, such as relocation, should not jeopardize the legitimate rights and benefits of existing career staff.

28. Mr. VAN BRAKEL (Canada) said that his delegation viewed favourably many of the suggestions made in the independent consultant's report (A/46/482), but retained an open mind as to how best to proceed. UNITAR was uniquely placed to provide training to Secretariat staff, for example, in peace-keeping and peacemaking activities. Orientation courses and briefings for diplomats were also worthwhile. In view of the extensive research carried out within and outside the United Nations system, which the United Nations should avail itself of, research should not be a significant UNITAR activity. However, research linked to training programmes should be pursued. The continued services of UNITAR Senior Fellows, operating in the context of an established and integrated work programme, were a worthwhile investment.

29. The recommendation that the Institute should be placed under the aegis of the United Nations University merited exploration. However, the Institute's focus on training left open other possibilities if that suggestion did not prove feasible. His delegation also endorsed the suggestion that the work of the UNITAR/UNDP Information Centre for Heavy Crude and Tar Sands should be transferred to the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development.

30. On the question of how to alleviate the Institute's financial difficulties, his delegation believed that the consultant's suggestion that the UNITAR headquarters property should be retained for present and future United Nations requirements was more properly an issue for the Fifth Committee to decide. His delegation would consider that possibility, provided that the United Nations acquired clear title to the property and the building without any encumbrances. It wished to know the prospects for financial returns from the rental of the existing building and believed that there were no funds available to demolish the existing structure and build a new multi-storey building. UNITAR should dispose of the building without delay, whether through sale or title transfer.

31. While disposal of the building would end the financial drain on the United Nations, it would not provide UNITAR with the financial support it needed to continue its activities. As to the consultant's recommendation that that goal would be achieved by allocating some $2 million to UNITAR under the regular budget, his delegation agreed, in principle, that funding for United Nations training requirements should be provided in the regular budget. Specific issues such as staffing requirements and the level of budgetary support must first be considered by the Programme Planning and Budget Division, ACABQ and the Fifth Committee.

(Mr. Van Brakel, Canada)

32. His delegation agreed that a system-wide rationalization of research and training activities was needed to achieve maximum results and ensure the best use of available funds. However, it was disappointed by the Advisory Committee's suggestion that another year of consultations was needed before the General Assembly could reach a decision on the matter. The General Assembly had clearly indicated its desire to reach decisions on UNITAR at the current session. He questioned whether the Organization could afford a further delay in reaching decisions, whatever the desirability of further studies and consultations.

33. Other agencies in the United Nations system which used the services of UNITAR could also be expected to reimburse the cost of the services received. Revenue generated in that way, together with a modest measure of support from the United Nations regular budget, should enable UNITAR to continue to provide a valued service which would respond to the real needs of the Organization. It did not appear that renewed exhortations for voluntary contributions to the General Fund would produce the necessary funding, given the budgetary constraints faced by many potential donor countries, including his own.

34. Mr. BARAC (Romania) commended UNITAR for its valuable achievements in the field of training and agreed with the independent consultant that the Institute's training activities and functions should be expanded within a new framework more suited to the responsibilities of the United Nations and the needs of Member States. His delegation also agreed that priority should be given to training in international cooperation and multilateral diplomacy, as well as in economic and social development. The Eastern European countries with economies in transition and the developing countries needed to train officials and personnel involved in multilateral negotiations and international cooperation. Accordingly, the Institute should facilitate contacts between training institutions in those countries and in the developed countries, encourage exchanges of teaching staff and invitations for visiting professors, and organize seminars and workshops in areas of interest to various countries. UNITAR was well placed to carry out those activities in view of its wealth of experience, its well-established links with institutes and research organizations in both developed and developing countries and its special position within the United Nations system.

35. UNITAR might also consider focusing on training new managers and upgrading the management skills of existing managers. In that connection, he expressed his delegation's appreciation to UNITAR for its initiative in organizing, in cooperation with the Atlanta Council for International Cooperation, a seminar on international economic cooperation for countries in Eastern Europe, to be held in December 1991.

36. His delegation also agreed that UNITAR training activities should be extended to peace-keeping operations, and believed that the pilot project to train personnel for peace-keeping missions should be implemented. It would also support the proposal to extend training activities to include the provision and development of human and material resources to ensure the

(Mr. Barac, Romania)

regularity of elections in countries endeavouring to return to pluralism and democracy. Training in environmental and natural resource management should be pursued in cooperation with UNEP, UNDP, UNCTAD, WMO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and various non-governmental organizations. He also expressed his delegation's gratitude for the very useful courses organized by UNITAR and the World Bank's Development Institute for members of permanent missions in New York.

37. In conclusion, he noted that two seminars had been held in his country under joint UNITAR/UNDP auspices to assist managers involved in the economic reform process, and that two additional seminars were planned. His country looked forward to further training seminars sponsored by a restructured UNITAR.

38. Mr. GAMBARI (Nigeria) reaffirmed his country's unshakeable faith in UNITAR and its activities and urged Member States to intensify their support for the Institute itself and the projects it had undertaken. His country had established a trust fund in the amount of $1 million for UNITAR, from which the accrued interest was paid as a voluntary contribution to the General Fund of the Institute. It had donated $75,000 to UNITAR in 1991.

39. UNITAR appeared to be on the threshold of a new lease of life. The highlights of the report by the independent consultant were, in his delegation's view, its conclusions that the mandate of UNITAR remained valid and relevant; that the Institute should not be closed down; that as long as its mandate remained valid, its training activities should be continued and expanded; and that its research work should be reoriented towards training. The Institute's training activities should focus on international cooperation and multilateral diplomacy, economic and social development, in-service training of United Nations and specialized-agency personnel, training of nationals from developing countries interested in international careers, and training for peace-keeping operations.

40. In the light of the Secretary-General's conclusion that the current situation of UNITAR had become untenable and that decisive steps were urgently required, Nigeria suggested two courses of action. First, UNITAR could continue as an autonomous training and research institute, funded by the General Assembly to the level of $2 million, while further studies were undertaken on ways of settling the Institute's debt, on the future location of its headquarters and on its linkage with the United Nations University. Second, the General Assembly could fund the General Fund budget of UNITAR to the level of $2 million, while retaining its headquarters in New York and deciding on any further studies it deemed appropriate to the concerns expressed by ACABQ.

41. Any decision on the fate of UNITAR should be taken in the context of a comprehensive review of the terms of reference, programmes, budget and financing of all research and training institutes with comparable aims, such as the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), the United Nations

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(Mr. Gambari, Nigeria)

International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI).

42. In view of the findings in the reports of ACABQ and the high-level independent consultant, Nigeria urged the Committee to call on the Secretary-General to report appropriately to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. It believed that only a balanced consideration of all the issues would serve the cause of a restructured Institute. In its conviction that long-term, forward-looking strategies were required to resolve the Institute's financial problems, Nigeria hoped to participate in all concerted efforts to revitalize UNITAR as recommended by the independent consultant.

43. Mr. KRAVETZ (El Salvador) said that an evaluation of UNITAR should be made in the context of an analysis and evaluation of comparable research and training entities, such as the United Nations Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), the United Nations Insitute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). El Salvador did not believe that any advantage would derive from the amalgamation of those separate institutes.

44. His delegation agreed that urgent measures were required to secure the continued operation of UNITAR activities and was encouraged by the opinion of the independent consultant that the Institute's training activities should even be expanded. In that context, it was concerned by the suggestion that UNITAR should be moved to Geneva, as such a move would be prejudicial to the Latin American region and could also result in a change of orientation in the Institute's training activities.

45. Research was an essential component of the Institute's work and El Salvador believed that its research activities should be reoriented as a function of training. The expansion of its training activities to include peace-keeping operations would be particularly valuable in view of the need for increased participation by Member States in such operations. El Salvador therefore welcomed the independent consultant's suggestion that the Institute could cooperate with the Peace Academy in carrying out a pilot project on training for peace-keeping operations. In view of the importance of such training, and of the recommendation by the Special Committee for Peace-Keeping Operations, in its report (A/46/254), on the need to establish a focal point for all training activities in the area of peace-keeping, El Salvador believed that UNITAR was the obvious choice. El Salvador therefore welcomed the initiative taken by UNITAR in launching a training programme for peace-keeping operations, the various components of which would be of great benefit both to the Secretariat staff and to personnel from Member States who were already participating, or who hoped to participate, in peace-keeping operations. He hoped that the Committee would endorse that initiative and gave assurances of El Salvador's support for any measures to ensure the survival and success of UNITAR.

46. Mr. BAHADIAN (Brazil) said that training and research should continue to play an important role within the United Nations. Noting the two major factors, identified in resolution 45/219, which guided discussion on the future of UNITAR, namely, the continuing importance of its functions, particularly in the field of training, and the need for increased government contributions to the Institute, he said that Brazil accepted the findings of the independent consultant on the reasons underlying the continued financial difficulties of UNITAR. Brazil had learned with great concern of the failure to implement the 1984 measures addressing long-term funding, recommended by the Executive Director.

47. The current financial crisis should not lead to the abolition or marginalization of the Institute. Instead, a more predictable mode of financing its activities should be found, to enable it to respond to the needs identified by Member States. The exploration of modalities to make UNITAR more effective should not be steered by the doubts of a few delegations, but should be based on the assumption that the Institute's training activities were essential both to the performance of the Organization and to the growth of the developing countries. Brazil also believed that the Institute could play a useful role in the field of research.

48. His delegation did not believe that an adjustment in the mandate of the Institute or its merger with other research and training facilities of the United Nations would be sufficient to overcome current problems or to revitalize the commitment of its major donors. Brazil also had grave reservations about the transferral of the Institute's training activities to Geneva. It favoured the continued location of UNITAR in New York, particularly in view of the close connection between its activities and issues dealt with at United Nations Headquarters.

49. While Brazil believed that UNITAR performed a crucial function in training personnel for peace-keeping operations and therefore supported its use to enhance the peace-keeping capabilities of United Nations staff and of personnel from the developing countries, it did not support the extended notion of peace-keeping referred to in paragraph 65 of the independent consultant's report and believed that such considerations fell outside the consultant's mandate.

50. Brazil also believed that UNITAR should address the issues of environment and energy, thereby offering valuable assistance to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). The protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development required a cultural change which could only be achieved through education and it was in that area, therefore, that UNITAR could play a crucial role.

51. His delegation agreed that efforts to restructure UNITAR would be futile without sufficient and regular sources of funding. UNITAR should have funds commensurate with its mandate and should not be subject to the vagaries of the system of voluntary contributions. Funding modalities should therefore be

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explored which would ensure that UNITAR continued to perform its tasks for the United Nations system and to assist the development of the developing countries.

52. Mr. ACHARYA (Nepal) said that the contributions made by UNITAR during the 26 years of its existence had been invaluable and it was therefore regrettable that the recommendations put forward by the Executive Director in 1984 to resolve the Institute's financial crisis had never been implemented. Nepal concurred, therefore, with the independent consultant's findings that UNITAR should focus more on training than on research. UNITAR had a greater role to play in the new international order, through the training of diplomats, training for economic and social development and training for peace-keeping operations. It could also develop a programme for the training of corporate lawyers, especially from developing and Eastern European countries.

53. UNITAR could become a focal point to promote peace-keeping literacy among United Nations staff members and the personnel of permanent missions. Since its inception, the United Nations had launched 13 peace-keeping operations, which had always been supported by Nepal, and his delegation therefore believed that UNITAR should be given the mandate to focus on peace-keeping operations at both the central and the regional levels.

54. Nepal believed that UNITAR headquarters could be moved to Geneva or, indeed, to any other place in Asia, Africa or Latin America.

55. While his delegation supported the independent consultant's recommendations on the placing of a redesigned UNITAR under the aegis of the United Nations University, the exact nature of that linkage should be carefully studied.

56. Nepal believed that urgent measures should be taken to resolve the current financial problems of UNITAR during the 1991 session of the General Assembly, which should request international donors to contribute about $2 million annually to the General Fund of UNITAR, as recommended by the Secretary-General.

57. Mr. BOUM (Cameroon) said that UNITAR had been established in 1965 in recognition of the essential importance of training and research for the Organization. Despite its current financial difficulties, the Institute's record was broadly positive and the 1,300 specialists it had trained from developing and other countries helped to promote mutual comprehension among States and assisted the United Nations with the performance of its essential tasks. Noting the reservations expressed by ACABQ with regard to the independent consultant's report, Cameroon believed that UNITAR should not be blocked in its activities and that urgent measures were required to rectify its budgetary position. His delegation supported the proposal that $2 million should be allocated to UNITAR through a separate budget line.

(Mr. Boum, Cameroon)

58. Cameroon had established its own institute of international relations, the Institut des Relations Internationales du Cameroun (IRIC), a number of whose former students or trainees were currently working at the United Nations either on the staff of the Organization or for various African permanent missions. Cameroon therefore believed strongly in the need for UNITAR to continue its valuable work in the area of training and hoped to develop close cooperation between UNITAR and IRIC.

59. Mr. HURLEY (United States of America) said that, while his delegation agreed that UNITAR performed some useful functions, it did not believe that many of its core functions merited the Institute's continued support through general resources. In the view of the United States, the regular budget should not be tapped for programmes such as UNITAR that failed to attract contributions from Member States. It urged the sale of the UNITAR headquarters building and the concurrent repayment by the Institute of its estimated $10 million debt to the United Nations. UNITAR should be restructured within the limits of the extrabudgetary resources available to it or, if that was not feasible, it should be eliminated. Despite its reservations about UNITAR, the United States attached great importance to the question of training and supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation regarding a review of training within the United Nations system. As ACABQ recommended in paragraph 19 of its report (A/46/624), the Secretary-General should be requested to provide the additional information needed to determine the best way to meet the training needs of the United Nations system. Moreover, given the serious budget-related concerns, the Fifth Committee should be asked to examine the financial issues involved so that the Second Committee might take its views into consideration in its deliberations.

60. Mr. MINAGAWA (Japan) said that his country had consistently been a major donor to UNITAR, which responded well to the needs of developing countries, particularly in the area of training.

61. His delegation supported the views expressed by ACABQ in its report. It attached great importance to selecting a host country for UNITAR headquarters that would provide favourable conditions. It believed that the regular budget should not be used to fund operational activities such as training and research and therefore disagreed with the independent consultant's proposal that $2 million a year should be allocated to UNITAR under the regular budget. Instead, resources currently utilized by other United Nations research and training institutes should be redeployed. In addition, the issue of the Institute's accumulated debt to the United Nations, currently estimated at more than $10 million, should be addressed squarely and resolved.

62. His delegation agreed with the view expressed by the Secretary-General in his report (A/46/619, para. 37) that the Institute's present situation had become untenable and that decisive steps must be taken immediately. It was confident that the Committee would, in its collective wisdom, be able to arrive at the necessary decisions.

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63. Mr. CHUPRIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, with the emergence of an entire family of United Nations bodies devoted to research, UNITAR had lost its unique status. Its own research work had been discontinued and its shift to specially funded scientific projects only ensured its survival at the cost of the universal nature of its work, as established in its mandate.

64. Despite efforts to improve the Institute's finances, the situation had worsened every year and the confidence of donors had declined. While the USSR appreciated the difficulties experienced by the Institute's management, it regretted that the opportunities to rectify the situation had not been seized in good time. It was now necessary to seek new sources of funds and for that reason his delegation supported the proposal that the UNITAR premises should be rented to the United Nations Secretariat, thereby reducing the Institute's debt to the Organization.

65. The USSR could not accept the independent consultant's suggestion that the General Fund of UNITAR should be secured through the inclusion of an annual budget line of $2 million in the regular budget of the United Nations. The USSR had always held that the General Fund should be financed exclusively from voluntary sources.

66. Despite the problems and shortcomings in the Institute's work, it had performed a variety of valuable services over the years and more than 80 specialists from the USSR had received training through UNITAR. In view of the important role UNITAR could play in training international civil servants, he suggested that the financing of the Institute could be secured by offering training programmes for organizations of the United Nations system in return for a 1 per cent allocation from their own budgets.

67. In view of the need for greater interfacing among United Nations research bodies, the USSR supported the proposed comprehensive analysis of their mandates, programmes and budgets and the possible merger of some of them, without prejudice to the continuation of their valuable work. In that regard, it believed that careful consideration should be given to the proposed incorporation of UNITAR into the United Nations University with the consequent downgrading of the post of its director to the D-2 level.

68. Ms. JANJUA (Pakistan) said her delegation agreed that, in the restructuring of UNITAR, it was necessary to increase its effectiveness and to retain functions that fulfilled the needs of Member States, especially the developing countries. The Institute, with its various training seminars, was of great importance to those countries, including her own. She was certain that her views were shared by the delegations of many other developing countries.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (*continued*) (A/C.2/46/L.10 and A/C.2/46/L.11)

Draft resolution on the target for World Food Programme pledges for the period 1993-1994 (A/C.2/46/L.10)

69. *Mr. BARAC* (Romania), speaking as Vice-Chairman of the Committee, said that the draft resolution in document A/C.2/46/L.10 had been recommended by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1991/78 for adoption by the General Assembly. Informal consultations had produced a consensus on the draft resolution as it stood, and he recommended its adoption without a vote.

70. *Draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.10 was adopted*.

Draft resolution on revision of the General Regulations of the World Food Programme and enlargement of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme (A/C.2/46/L.11)

71. *Mr. BARAC* (Romania), speaking as Vice-Chairman of the Committee, said that the draft resolution in document A/C.2/46/L.11 had been recommended by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1991/77 for adoption by the General Assembly. As a consensus on the draft resolution had been reached during informal consultations, he recommended its adoption without a vote.

72. *Draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.11 was adopted*.

AGENDA ITEM 77: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (*continued*) (A/C.2/46/L.16)

Draft resolution on economic stabilization programmes in developing countries (A/C.2/46/L.16)

73. *Mr. BARAC* (Romania), speaking as Vice-Chairman of the Committee, said that informal consultations had produced a consensus on draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.16. He recommended that the Committee should adopt it without a vote.

74. *Draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.16 was adopted*.

AGENDA ITEM 77: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (*continued*)

(c) WORLD DECADE FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (*continued*) (A/C.2/46/L.50 and A/C.2/46/L.51)

Draft resolution on the World Decade for Cultural Development (A/C.2/46/L.50)

75. *Mr. NAADJIE* (Ghana), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.50 on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the main thrust of the text was to give impetus to the implementation of the Plan of Action for the World Decade for Cultural

(Mr. Naadjie, Ghana)

Development by inviting States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as United Nations organs, organizations and bodies to contribute actively to the mid-term review. He urged the Committee to adopt it by consensus.

Draft resolution on the World Commission on Culture and Development (A/C.2/46/L.51)

76. Mr. FJAERTOFT (Norway), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.51, said that Mozambique had joined the list of sponsors. The text established the procedural basis for the establishment of the World Commission and created the necessary link between the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the General Assembly. From the vital standpoint of financing, many delegations had already indicated a willingness to support the draft resolution, which was sponsored by both developed and developing countries.

AGENDA ITEM 82: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/C.2/46/L.47)

Draft resolution on the celebration of World Food Day (A/C.2/46/L.47)

77. Mr. NAADJIE (Ghana), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.47, said that Cape Verde, Jamaica, Liberia, and the Niger had withdrawn from the list of sponsors, while Algeria, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Gambia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen and Zambia had joined it. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 84: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE (continued)

(b) SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (continued) (A/C.2/46/L.45)

Draft resolution on emergency assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia (A/C.2/46/L.45)

78. Mr. RAMADAN (Egypt), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.45, said that Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Suriname and the United Arab Emirates had joined the list of sponsors. In view of the very considerable need for additional assistance, he hoped that the resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 85: INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE ECONOMIC REHABILITATION OF ANGOLA (continued) (A/C.2/46/L.49)

Draft resolution on international assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Angola (A/C.2/46/L.49)

79. Mr. MOTA SARDENBERG (Brazil), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.49, said that Cape Verde, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Italy, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nicaragua, Panama and the United Kingdom had joined the list of sponsors. He underlined the importance of continued support for the efforts of the people and Government of Angola. Angola was a country which had outstanding potential for development, and its economic rehabilitation would benefit the other countries of the region by providing increased opportunities for trade and cooperation. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would receive the unanimous support of the Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 91: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REHABILITATION OF LIBERIA (continued) (A/C.2/46/L.43)

Draft resolution on assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia (A/C.2/46/L.43)

80. Mr. MAMFOUMBI (Gabon), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.43 on behalf of the African Group, said that Barbados, Belgium, Mexico, the United Kingdom and the United States of America had joined the list of sponsors. The text under consideration was a follow-up to resolution 45/232, "Emergency assistance to Liberia". Two minor changes had been made: in the sixth preambular paragraph, the word "demobilization" had been replaced by the words "encampment and disarmament", and in paragraph 5 (b), the word "Government" had been replaced by the word "authorities". He hoped that, like the previous year's resolution, the current text would be adopted by consensus.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-SIXTH SESSION
Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
43rd meeting
held on
Monday, 18 November 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 43rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BURKE (Ireland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 78: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (A/46/48 (vols. I and II), A/46/86-S/22226, A/46/264, 293, 308, 315, 336, 344, 423, 501/Rev.1, 520 and 598; A/C.2/46/4)

AGENDA ITEM 79: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND (A/46/264, 273, A/46/283-E/1991/114, A/46/336, 344, 345, 501/Rev.1, 520, 598 and 602)

1. Mr. STRONG (Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development), referring to the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference on its third session (A/46/48 (vol. II)), said that 32 decisions had been adopted at the session. Those decisions would guide the Secretariat in preparing documentation prior to the Preparatory Committee's fourth and final session, to be held in New York from 2 March to 3 April 1992. Many of the decisions also represented strides in building areas of agreement on some issues and defined some of the basic elements contained in General Assembly resolution 44/228. In estabishing the structure and organization of Agenda 21, the Preparatory Committee had provided input to the Secretariat on the incorporation of development-related issues such as human settlements, poverty, sustainability and demographic pressures, health and education, and integrated environmental accounting. Its decisions, which marked the introduction of a signficant political dimension into the preparatory process, stressed both the role of women, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities in Agenda 21 and the importance of action at the international, regional and national levels.

2. At its third session the Preparatory Committee had focused on the cross-sectoral issues of financing, technology transfer and institutions. Consensus on those issues would be vital to the success of the Conference. There was almost total agreement on the need for additional financial resources from external sources in order to support developing countries' efforts to achieve sustainable development and prevent global risks. However, the problem of how to obtain those resources was still being considered. The Conference secretariat, which had been requested to estimate the cost of implementing each programme area of Agenda 21, hoped to provide some broad indications in that regard.

3. Significant progress had been achieved on the question of technology transfer. In that area, support was increasing for the promotion of endogenous capacity-building in developing countries through the strengthening of human resources and institutions. Multilateral and bilateral institutions and the private sector could all play a significant role in the process.

4. While the Preparatory Committee had not had sufficient time to focus on specific institutional matters, it had adopted certain broad positions which could be further developed during the final preparatory session. Institutional measures included in the follow-up to the Conference should be

(Mr. Strong)

not only international, but also regional, subregional, national and local in scope. They should move the United Nations forward in its quest for a new brand of multilateralism based on partnership, and they should be consonant with the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields. The decisions taken at the Conference could strengthen the role of the United Nations as the centre-piece of democratic global governance, for the Conference would explore the very premises of cooperation among Governments, societies and peoples. Indeed, some premises might have to be redefined in the light of the recent dramatic changes in the concepts of government and international relations. Since the Earth Summit must forge a partnership of people as well as institutions, he attached great importance to the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee and in the Conference itself. Thus far, the response of NGOs, indigenous peoples, women and youth to invitations to participate had been extremely encouraging. Indeed, NGO activities in support of the Conference had proliferated. For example, a conference would be hosted by the Government of France in December 1991, and a Global Forum, planned by the International Facilitating Committee in conjunction with the Brazilian NGO Forum, would take place simultaneously with the Conference itself. The results of those meetings would be communicated to the Conference as part of the sector-related activities taking place at the Riocentro convention facility.

5. The work of the Conference secretariat had been greatly facilitated by exceptional cooperation within the United Nations system, and by regional and national preparations. At the second Regional African Preparatory Conference held recently in Abidjan, the Abidjan Declaration on Environment and Development and an "African common position on environment and development" had been adopted. The African regional conference had stressed the need for additional strong commitments to Africa in such crucial areas as desertification, food security and water. Future regional or topic-oriented conferences which would doubtless enrich Agenda 21 included the Symposium on Sustainable Development - From Concept to Action, to be held in The Hague, Netherlands; a conference on an "Agenda for Science for Environment and Development into the Twenty-First Century" (ASCEND-21) to be held in Vienna; a joint meeting of aid and development ministers, to be held in Paris under the auspices of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); an International Conference on Water and the Environment to be held in Dublin; a proposed meeting of ministers of developing countries in Kuala Lumpur in April 1992; the special session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), to be held in February 1992; and consultations among a small, high-level group of financial and policy leaders on financing global environment and development needs to be held in Tokyo in April 1992.

6. Reports on national experiences would also be reflected in Agenda 21. Intergovernmental negotiations were expected to produce conventions on the protection of climate and biological diversity for signature at the Conference. While significant progress had been achieved in the negotiations, there was still much work to do in the relatively short time remaining.

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(Mr. Strong)

Working Group I had made headway in the elaboration of principles on the management, conservation and development of all types of forests. The Preparatory Committee had also adopted a decision on the provisional agenda, organization of work and provisional rules of procedure of the Conference, which it hoped the General Assembly would approve.

7. Preparations were proceeding on schedule in Brazil, where the Brazilian authorities, the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Brazil - who was also the representative of the Conference - were cooperating closely. At the United Nations Secretariat in New York and the United Nations Office in Geneva, a Conference Management Committee had been established.

8. Referring to Preparatory Committee decision 3/12 on the adequate and full participation of developing countries, he noted that the resources available in the voluntary fund amounted to only $11,000. As more than $1 million would be needed to finance the participation of developing countries in the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, he appealed to all Governments to contribute generously to the fund.

9. Not much time remained to synthesize the many proposals for an Earth Charter or Declaration. It was therefore encouraging that the final session of the Preparatory Committee would be a negotiating session, which would open with discussions of cross-sectoral issues, such as financial resources and the transfer of technology. Agreement must also be reached on institutional matters and Agenda 21 so that a set of recommendations could be submitted to the Conference. Since the remaining issues to be worked out were extremely complex, it might be advisable for Ministers to participate towards the end of the final session of the Preparatory Committee. Formal invitations to the Conference had been issued to Governments and to heads of State or Government, all but one of whom had indicated that they would attend. Special arrangements were being made for the participation of heads of State or Government during the final two days of the Conference. It was his hope that, at that time, some of them would announce unilateral initiatives in support of the decisions taken by the Conference.

10. Mr. CUTAJAR (Executive Secretary, Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change) said that the remarks just made by the Secretary-General of the Conference, particularly on financing and technology transfer, were encouraging. The political visibility of the Conference and the prospect of summit-level participation would doubtless encourage Governments to agree on a framework convention on climate change for signature in Rio de Janeiro. The report of the Secretary-General on the protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind (A/46/602) summarized the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 45/212. Since the report had been issued, two new documents had been submitted in preparation for the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The documents, submitted by the Officers of Working Group I and the Co-Chairmen of Working Group II, contained elements for a draft convention

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based on previous submissions and discussions at the third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The first document contained elements for the preamble of a convention, guidelines for implementation of a convention, and a statement of objectives and commitments by individual parties on short-term or long-term cooperation with respect to sources and sinks of greenhouse gases, transfers of financial resources and technology, and responses to the special circumstances of developing countries. The second document dealt primarily with mechanisms for implementing the commitments undertaken and various legal provisions. Referring to paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report, he noted that economic concerns had become increasingly important to countries participating in the climate change negotiations. The long-term growth potential of those countries in a warming world; their access to the necessary technology to that end; future consumption of their coal and oil resources; the impact of warming on their agriculture, fisheries and exports; and their achievement of energy efficiency were all economic concerns. The shift in the focus of the climate change discussions - from the realm of science to that of economics - must be adequately reflected in the composition and strength of delegations.

11. Thus far, developing countries had been able to send only one-person delegations to the sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. That was because the Secretariat had been able to offer financial support to only one delegate from each of some 100 developing countries, including all the least developed countries and most of the small island developing countries, thanks to generous contributions to the voluntary fund. However, $500,000 would be needed and half of it in the first few weeks of 1992 - in order to defray the cost of participation in the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (para. 12).

12. At its current session the General Assembly would have to take two administrative decisions relating to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The first concerned the calendar of meetings for 1992 (para. 5), and whether a fifth session should be scheduled in New York in February 1992, followed by a brief resumed session in April. The second concerned budgetary arrangements for the secretariat of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (para. 19). The United Nations Controller had authorized ad hoc arrangements in order to make provision for the secretariat in 1991, taking into account the requirement that no additional appropriations from the United Nations regular budget should be made in 1991. It was to be hoped that the General Assembly would approve new arrangements for the provision of adequate funding from the regular budget in 1992.

13. Mr. RIPERT (Chairman, Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change) said that the Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee had just outlined some of the facts which the Second Committee might take into account when drafting its resolution on the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The task of completing the proposed framework convention prior to the Conference would be difficult and complex, but not beyond the bounds of possibility,

(Mr. Ripert)

provided that the secretariats of the Conference and the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee continued their close and fruitful collaboration and that an appropriate timetable was strictly adhered to. The text bringing together the various elements worked out by the two working groups established by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to deal with commitments and mechanisms should be available in time for the Committee's fourth session, to be held at Geneva from 9 to 20 December 1991. In addition to the fifth session planned for February 1992, a resumed session, which would take place in April 1992, was being contemplated.

14. The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee's deliberations had greatly benefited from the work of the UNEP/WMO Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which was preparing an update of its First Assessment Report (1990).

15. At the same time, many difficult issues remained to be resolved, and it was essential to ascertain the views of Member States so that negotiations could proceed on a balanced basis. In particular, adequate participation by the developing countries must be ensured. He therefore appealed for additional financial resources to make that participation possible.

16. One positive consideration was that a substantial number of countries had, on their own initiative, committed themselves to a policy of counteracting the adverse impact of gas emissions. No one would dispute that the industrialized countries bore the major responsibility for such emissions, but it was important to establish what they should do in the short term, while ensuring sufficient flexibility in the long term to tackle a problem which was cumulative in its effect. The field was one in which forecasting was subject to uncertainty, and its complexity was compounded by issues which embraced not merely the meteorology of the ozone layer but social and economic issues as well. Key sectors must be identified, bearing in mind that not all aspects of the problem could be tackled at once, and that protocols might be needed to supplement the proposed convention in the longer term.

17. Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that it had been gratifying that at the Preparatory Committee's third session it had been agreed that the following development-related issues should be incorporated into all Agenda 21 programme documents: (a) poverty, economic growth and environment; (b) international trade and environment; (c) structural adjustment and environment; (d) commodities and environment; (e) external indebtedness, resource flows and environment; and (f) large industrial enterprises, including transnational corporations, business practices and environment.

18. Means of implementation of the programmes were also to be specified. In particular, ways and means of providing new and additional financial resources were to be clearly identified, in addition to action-oriented proposals for favourable access to and transfer of environmentally sound technology, especially to the developing countries, and for the promotion of endogenous capacities for development. Moreover, the respective responsibilities of developed and developing countries were to be clearly stated.

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(Mr. Kufuor, Ghana)

19. The industrialized countries bore the main responsibility for remedying the environmental problems confronting the world today, since they were the principal source of pollution of the planet. General Assembly resolution 44/228 made that point quite clearly.

20. The Group of 77 had also made specific and detailed proposals relating to new and additional resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technology to developing countries. Unfortunately, however, the developed countries had not been prepared to engage in substantive discussions of those proposals, an attitude which had been in contrast to the willingness of the developing countries to discuss such issues as forests, biological diversity, and the protection of the atmosphere, the oceans and freshwater resources, which had enabled the Preparatory Committee to make good progress in those areas. In effect the developed countries had come prepared to discuss issues in which they were seeking environmental concessions from the South, but had not been prepared to consider issues on which they themselves must also make concessions. At future sessions, the Group of 77 would make sure that parallel progress was made on all issues, in order to assure a balanced outcome.

21. Although negotiations must be reserved for the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, it was important to restate the basic principle that environmental protection could not be undertaken at the expense of the development objectives of developing countries. The South had a right to adequate "environmental space" for its current and future development needs. The concept of sustainable development did not simply mean that the needs of the present must be met without prejudice to those of the future: it also implied that the needs of the North should be met in ways that did not compromise the satisfaction of the current and future needs of the South. All resources within the territorial domain of the developing countries were the national heritage of those countries and could not be transmuted through any device, legal or otherwise, into "global commons".

22. In the negotiations relating to the protection of the atmosphere, developed countries must make firm commitments to reduce and stabilize their current excessive levels of greenhouse gas emissions. Discretionary arrangements that allowed the developed countries to do as they pleased with regard to the levels of their emissions were unacceptable. It would be wrong and counter-productive, for example, for poor forest dwellers to be removed from their habitat in the interests of forest conservation so that unsustainable consumption patterns in the developed countries could be maintained. It was therefore important that the developed countries should not seek to shift the burden of environmental protection onto the south. The developing countries were prepared to cooperate for the protection of the environment of the planet, but only on an equitable basis. Why was it that a convention on biological diversity was being negotiated, while there was no corresponding convention on biotechnology?

23. Institutions to be established after the Conference must be based on

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(Mr. Kufuor, Ghana)

democratic principles in which all had an equal opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

24. The full participation of the developing countries was essential to the success of the Preparatory Committee, and he therefore echoed the appeal for extra funds to enable them to participate fully.

25. Mr. VAN SCHAIK (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Community, said that the Conference represented a crucial opportunity for focusing world-wide efforts to halt and reverse environmental degradation and to pave the way towards a new and full integration of environment and development.

26. Over the past year, in the preparatory process leading up to the Conference, the Community and its member States had made great efforts to reconcile environmental requirements and development imperatives. As outlined during the third session of the Preparatory Committee, their basic approach consisted of three elements. Firstly, the industrialized countries, recognizing their global responsibility, must considerably increase their commitment to limiting the burden they imposed on the planet's ecosystem to their legitimate share. Secondly, there must be equal partnership with developing countries, based on mutual trust and equity in negotiations and decision-making in the field of environment and development. Thirdly, they must substantially increase their support to the developing countries and economies in transition in the effort to achieve sustainable development, recognizing both the sovereignty and the responsibilities of the countries in question.

27. Both poverty and affluence had so far led to environmental deterioration and to depletion of natural resources. The rich, who were mainly but not exclusively to be found in the industrial countries, utilized a disproportionate share of the world's renewable and non-renewable resources, discharging their waste into the environment in quantities that exceeded the ecosystem's capacity for absorption. At the same time, the poor, who were mainly though not exclusively to be found in developing countries, were forced to overexploit their resource base. The efficient use of scarce natural and financial assets lay at the heart of the negotiations within the framework of the Conference.

28. The States members of the European Community expected the General Assembly at its current session to endorse the Preparatory Committee's report and to appeal strongly to all parties to commit themselves fully to achieving consensus at the Preparatory Committee's fourth session in 1992: with only one remaining session to overcome the many fundamental differences, a strong political impetus was required. It was therefore desirable that delegations should participate at a decision-making level. The fourth session should be an opportunity for an effective negotiation session, focusing on concrete proposals and texts. The States members of the European Community appreciated the input provided by non-governmental organizations in the Preparatory

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(Mr. Van Schaik, Netherlands)

Committee's deliberations and the active participation of indigenous peoples in its work. The latter had an important responsibility for safeguarding the environment, and full account should be taken of their knowledge, resource management and conservation practices.

29. The States members of the European Community welcomed the fact that the Preparatory Committee had now designated human settlements as a distinct programme under Agenda 21, and urged that adequate time should be allocated to substantive negotiations on that issue.

30. The European Community and its member States expected the Conference to achieve the following specific results: firstly, the adoption of an Earth Charter containing key principles and general rights and obligations in the field of environment and development; secondly, the adoption of Agenda 21 in the form of a global programme of action with specific objectives, targets and timetables; thirdly, the signature of conventions on biological diversity and climate change, and a global consensus on forests which should form the basis for a future convention; and, fourthly, well-defined recommendations for the strengthening and further development of institutional arrangements in the field of environment and development and in respect of financing and technological cooperation.

31. The European Community and its member States were in the process of developing a common position on the issues under consideration, both among themselves and in consultation with others, with a view to full participation in the Conference and its outcome. Major initiatives in that process would have to emerge from the OECD ministerial meeting on environment and development to be held in early December and from meetings of the Council of the European Community in the months to come. In particular, the evolving Global Environment Facility should play the leading role in helping developing countries to tackle global environmental policies. In addition, the Community would actively participate in various expert and sectoral meetings, including the International Conference on Water and the Environment, to be held in Dublin in January 1992.

32. Agenda item 21 should include specific recommendations to further strengthen participation of women in environment and development. Policies had neglected the essential role of women in primary environmental management through their roles as caretakers, producers and providers for their families.

33. Countries had a common but differentiated responsibility in addressing climate change. Agreement on stabilization of carbon dioxide emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000 by the industrialized countries was a crucial part of the preparations for the framework convention on climate change, and the European Community reaffirmed its commitment to that target. Simultaneously, developing countries should adopt strategies to keep future greenhouse gas emissions to the lowest possible level compatible with their development aims. Developed countries should strengthen cooperation with

(Mr. Van Schaik, Netherlands)

developing countries through the provision of financial resources and appropriate transfer of environmentally sound technologies. The framework convention on climate change would involve complex issues without simple solutions, and the European Community was committed to an open and constructive discussion.

34. Developing countries required special support to address the issue of conservation of biological diversity. Substantial progress in negotiating a convention on biological diversity could be achieved if all partners worked together, taking into account each other's capabilities and problems. Every effort should be made to ensure that measures to conserve biological diversity were integrated into current and future development strategies. Indeed, GATT had recently decided to convene a working party on trade and the environment and one of the topics on the working party's preliminary agenda was the relationship between trade principles in existing multilateral environmental conventions and the principles and provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The best possible environmental protection must be linked with a dynamic and open multilateral trade system.

35. The Earth Summit would test the will of Governments, both developed and developing, to address urgent problems relating to environment and development, as well as the capacity of the United Nations to address effectively vital issues of global concern.

36. Miss SAAD (Egypt) said that, because of the political significance of the Conference, it would not be surprising if the Second Committee's negotiations and discussions at the current session of the General Assembly were somewhat restrained, since delegations were awaiting the final Preparatory Committee session. As a result of global political change over the past two years or so, confrontation between East and West had yielded to a *détente*, interests and axis had shifted, and the fear of marginalization haunting the third world had been heightened significantly.

37. Her delegation argued that the Conference, rather than the United Nations itself, represented the forum for change, owing to the significant scope of its mandate and its timing at the beginning of a new era in international relations. It was not actually a summit on environment or development, but a conference on global governance, covering all areas formerly addressed by United Nations Charter bodies such as the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the Economic and Social Council. It represented an opportunity to restructure and reorder priorities, and also to define a new role for Charter bodies. The United Nations had been established 45 years earlier by the countries which had emerged from the Second World War in positions of world leadership. Currently, the equation was unbalanced, with the industrialized North on one side and the relatively disadvantaged South on the other. The significance of the Conference lay in the fact that as an intergovernmental forum it was of the same value as the United Nations itself. Almost every issue or process currently under discussion, whether substantive or structural, awaited the outcome of the Conference.

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(Miss Saad, Egypt)

38. It appeared that the substantive preparatory work for the Conference was being conducted on the periphery of the Preparatory Committee, whether in the context of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, the negotiations on biological diversity, or expert group meetings sponsored by United Nations organs and, most significantly, by NGOs. The preparatory process had been voided of its tasks. As a result, the Conference would be witnessing the peak of political deliberations on a new consensus on international relations, and new avenues could be opened for economic cooperation based on the assumption of the corrective capacity of the free market mechanism in dealing with issues relating to environmental degradation.

39. If at the Conference, insufficient emphasis was placed on man's responsibility for his fellow man and on needs here and now, and if East-West confrontation was replaced by North-South confrontation, then the third world had every reason to be worried. However, the worst scenario would be if the process of change was stalled - if the Conference was stalled and handicapped.

40. Mr. ESTRADA OYUELA (Argentina) said that the common task of protecting the environment could be fulfilled only through close cooperation allowing developing countries access to sufficient resources to sustain their efforts. His Government had based its hopes for the future on the abilities of its people and its rich natural resources, which would be preserved for the use and well-being of future generations. In addition to natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, his Government was concerned by man-made problems such as damage to the ozone layer and global warming. It had demonstrated its commitment to environmental protection by ratification of the recent Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

41. Environmental protection and economic development must be complementary. Development undertaken without due regard for the conservation of natural resources was inevitably unsustainable, but without economic development it was equally impossible to achieve conservation. Unbridled consumption and absolute poverty were equally damaging to the ecosystem. There had been much discussion of the negative effects of clearing forests to obtain agricultural land, but it must also be pointed out that in developed countries agricultural subsidies encouraging intensive cultivation and extensive use of agricultural chemicals and mechanical methods not only caused soil deterioration and water contamination but also market distortions. If that trend was not halted, it would result in a widespread decline in food production. Only balanced economic development and environmental protection could provide the security that mankind hoped for.

42. The Conference had raised great expectations among the members of the international community. Its final document would contain a declaration of basic universal principles on development and environment and an ambitious programme known as "Agenda 21". It was also hoped that two important conventions would be opened for signature: the convention on climate change and the convention on biological diversity and biotechnology. More rapid

(Mr. Estrada Oyuela, Argentina)

progress was required on the convention on climate change. Agreement on the stabilization of greenhouse gas emissions must be based on specific commitments. A clear understanding of the function of the oceans was also required, because the current tendency was to overemphasize rainforest protection. The convention on biological diversity and biotechnology must create appropriate conditions for access to animal and plant species found mainly in developing countries, sharing the costs and benefits of access to biotechnology, and ways to assist the developing countries with the cost of conserving natural habitats.

43. All those questions were related to the availability of resources and access to technology, without which the goals of Agenda 21 could not be met, emissions of greenhouse gases could not be controlled and biological diversity could not be preserved. Developed and developing countries must work together to find financial, political and institutional formulas to give developing countries access to new and additional resources that would enable them to deal with environmental problems, which were of a global nature. The transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries should be a non-profit undertaking, since it would ultimately benefit all countries.

44. The Argentine and Brazilian delegations had submitted to the Preparatory Committee a position paper (A/CONF.151/PC/93) on the financial resources needed for Agenda 21, in which they had specified that such resources should not be applied solely to global problems, but should also be made available for local and regional ecological needs. With respect to the transfer of technology, the principle that market mechanisms should be used to encourage environmental preservation and to discourage environmental degradation suggested that market mechanisms should also be applied to stimulate the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and to penalize the transfer of environmentally hazardous technologies. Both financial resources and the transfer of technology for environmental protection would require the negotiation of effective formulas to avoid useless confrontations in a matter which, by its nature, called for solidarity.

45. Ms. RODRIGUEZ (Uruguay) said that, although the international community had learned much about the causes and prevention of environmental degradation over the past 20 years, some environmental hazards had worsened, and new environmental challenges had arisen. At the first session of the Preparatory Committee, her delegation had stressed the need to approach environmental problems with due regard to their socio-economic aspects.

46. She welcomed the new spirit of international cooperation in environmental matters, particularly the development of transboundary cooperation, in which countries applied common environmental policies in border areas. However, enhanced economic cooperation was also necessary, since environment and development were closely linked. Many developing countries had lost ground over the past decade, owing to such factors as external debt, the use of inappropriate technologies, a general decline in commodity prices and deteriorating terms of trade. Since sustainable and environmentally sound

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(*Ms. Rodriguez, Uruguay*)

development required a favourable international economic climate, environmental protection efforts must not take the form of "ecological protectionism" by creating new conditions for economic aid and new barriers to international trade.

47. At the Conference and in subsequent forums, the international community must address four basic issues: (1) the establishment of environmental protection principles in the form of a convention; (2) the obligations and rights of States with respect to the environment under multilateral conventions; (3) criteria for the establishment of a legal system to settle environmental disputes and to impose penalties for violations of environmental principles; and (4) criteria to determine responsibility for such violations, including those involving the export of dangerous substances from industrialized countries to developing countries.

48. The link between the environment and disarmament must also be addressed. The environmental impact of the production of military equipment and of such military activities as nuclear testing was obvious, while the environmental situation in the Persian Gulf region demonstrated the ecological consequences of military conflict. The link between the environment and disarmament had been explored in the Secretary-General's report on the potential uses of resources allocated to military activities for civilian endeavours to protect the environment. Her delegation had sponsored a draft resolution in the First Committee (A/C.1/46/L.7/Rev.1) which requested the Secretary-General to submit that report to the Preparatory Committee and to arrange for its reproduction as a United Nations publication. In addition, Uruguay was taking steps to accede to the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, which had been one of the first instruments to recognize and regulate the link between the environment and military activities.

49. Uruguay had just signed an agreement with the European Economic Community in which it undertook to cooperate in the protection and improvement of the environment. At the national level, Uruguay had established the necessary legal framework for the elaboration of an environmental policy, and had adopted an environmental plan of action. Its position on environmental issues was both pragmatic and principled, and the Uruguayan Government reaffirmed its commitment both to the Conference and to international cooperation in environmental protection.

AGENDA ITEM 83: INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION (*continued*) (A/C.2/46/L.39)

50. *The CHAIRMAN* announced that Finland had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.39.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-SIXTH SESSION
Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
44th meeting
held on
Monday, 18 November 1991
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 44th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BURKE (Ireland)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 78: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/46/48 (Supplement No. 48, vol. I and II), A/46/86-S/22226, A/46/264, A/46/293, A/46/308, A/46/315, A/46/336, A/46/344, A/46/423, A/46/501/Rev.1, A/46/520, A/46/598 and A/C.2/46/4)

AGENDA ITEM 79: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND (continued) (A/46/602, A/46/264, A/46/273, A/46/283-E/1991/114, A/46/336, A/46/344, A/46/345, A/46/501/Rev.1, A/46/520 and A/46/598)

1. Mr. FORTIER (Canada) commended delegations on the efforts made during the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which had marked a turning-point and stated his country's determination to take up the challenges of the fourth session, at which difficult decisions would have to be taken in order to set priorities on the many environment and development issues.

2. Since there was a relatively long time before the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, his delegation believed that there should be an exchange of information and ideas about approaches to the numerous issues on the agenda of the Conference, with a view to achieving a consensus and facilitating the negotiations at the fourth session. In particular, it commended the effort made to keep the members and observers of the Second Committee informed about the work done by the Preparatory Committee's working groups on such questions as the structure of Agenda 21, the text of the Earth Charter, and financing and transfer of technology, as well as about the intergovernmental discussions held subsequent to the meeting.

3. In reviewing the report of the third session of the Preparatory Committee (A/46/48, vol. I and II) his delegation had noted that, in addition to the Committee's documents, several delegations had requested the reports of the relevant international meetings, and it would therefore like the Conference secretariat to clarify the situation with respect to documentation, especially since at the last session of the Preparatory Committee valuable time had been lost simply because some documents had not been available or because they had been available only in some languages - something which must not happen again. His delegation was willing to agree that the secretariat should produce first the documents of highest priority, i.e. those which formed the basis for the substantive negotiations, and then the documents which contained background material.

4. It was a matter for satisfaction that at its third session the Preparatory Committee had come to a quick agreement about the rules of procedure of the Conference and the arrangements for the accreditation of non-governmental organizations, for it was to be hoped that an active part would be taken in the Conference by Governments, international organizations

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(Mr. Fortier)

and representatives of young people, women, indigenous peoples, business and industry, labour, the world's cities, and universities and scientific associations. There was a need for an open and constructive dialogue between the non-governmental organizations and the other participants in the Conference, and for all sides to listen to each other and be prepared to compromise.

5. His country had been taking stock of the progress made with respect to the content and structure of Agenda 21 and it was committed to addressing the issues raised therein, not only internationally but domestically as well. It was therefore examining the implications of Agenda 21 for Canadian legislation. Given its resources and geography, Canada had a special interest in such issues as forests, fisheries management, protection of the marine environment, and the quantity and quality of fresh water, and it wished to draw up principles and agreements to protect the environment and promote sustainable development, of which the Earth Charter and the other documents to be signed at the 1992 Conference would be key elements. It recognized the unique relationship between indigenous peoples and local ecosystems, the key role played by women in their interaction with the environment to produce food and nurture their families, and the impact of population growth on the quality of life and the pace of development. The success of the Conference in solving all those problems would ultimately determine the financial, technological and institutional framework for the twenty-first century and beyond. Some priorities would have to be set, but it would be important to solve the problems in an integrated manner.

6. His delegation supported the proposal that, in order to facilitate the discussions at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, the resolutions on the subject adopted by the General Assembly at its current session should be only procedural. It was also open to the possibility of adopting no resolutions but rather a decision, although it was understandable that delegations should wish to address the question of participation in the Conference. However, it reiterated its commitment to ensuring that the Rio Conference was open and transparent and that all the participants would have an opportunity to listen to and learn from each other.

7. With respect to the preparation of a framework convention on climate change, the resolution on protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind, which would shortly be taken up, might present the Committee with an opportunity to indicate its clear support for the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. It would be particularly helpful for the draft texts prepared by the working groups to be made available, for it would thus be possible for the Intergovernmental Committee to conduct detailed negotiations at its December session and prepare an integrated negotiating text. With a view to securing the broadest possible participation in that process, Canada would also like to contribute in good time to the special voluntary fund for the participation of developing countries.

8. Mr. SINGH (India) said that the international community, alive to the urgent need to address environmental concerns, had united its efforts to achieve the objectives which it had identified in that area. Global environmental action must be based on consensus and it demanded an understanding of diverse interests, a willingness to address them jointly, and the determination to commit the resources needed for the purpose. The Earth Charter to be drafted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development must take into account both the planet and the beings which inhabited it and had such a great, and often negative, influence on its future.

9. Similarly, Agenda 21 should not be regarded as a doctor's prescription but as an instrument which incorporated all the relevant factors. Ecological cooperation required an understanding of the mutuality of influences and interests and the consequent need for mutuality in action in accordance with the priorities and capacities of all concerned.

10. His country's primary environmental concerns stemmed from its experience and capabilities as a developing country. Many years ago it had set up a Ministry for the Environment, and before that there had already been several non-governmental organizations active in the field; it therefore had extensive knowledge of its environmental protection needs, which related more to underdevelopment rather than to overdevelopment. In the first place, India had a large population which exploited finite, and in many cases diminishing, natural resources. Secondly, countries such as India invested almost all their resources in development plans designed to improve the health, nutrition, education, social care, housing and other needs of their population. If environmental requirements were to take on national importance, they must be integrated in those plans, and that demanded financial and other resources which the developing countries usually did not have. Thirdly, the topic of global environmental problems usually covered only the degradation resulting from industrial and commercial overexploitation. Underdevelopment bore part of the blame for environmental degradation, but current ecological damage was due largely to the overexploitation imposed by growth, and it would therefore continue unless the principles of respect for the environment were incorporated in people's lifestyles.

11. Although it was difficult to decide whose responsibility it was to ensure that change, it was appropriate to note that those who were better placed in terms of resources and opportunities were in the best position to do so. Thus, it was not possible to impose complete equality in global environmental efforts to protect the environment. The developed world bore a special responsibility, both in terms of taking corrective action and in terms of enabling the developing world to play a meaningful role in those efforts. The concept of sustainable development meant that the needs of those who were better off should be met in ways that did not limit the current and future needs of the less fortunate, and that the former would assist the latter in establishing that equilibrium.

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(Mr. Singh, India)

12. In the deliberations on the various issues to be discussed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, it had been stated that the ability of the developing countries to confront environmental problems required additional financial resources, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies on favourable terms and the establishment of institutions to guarantee those measures. With regard to environmental conditionalities in aid-giving, that receiving countries recognized the importance of taking environmental factors into account when utilizing aid, but it was not reasonable to exact ecological guarantees as a condition for providing additional resources.

13. Furthermore, his delegation had consistently argued that the distinction between national and global environmental problems was forced. The solution to problems such as deforestation, land degradation and desertification would yield substantial global benefits in the areas of global warming and biodiversity. Environment and development must be addressed in an integrated manner, and problems should not be categorized as "ours" or "theirs". Accordingly, a serious rethinking of international economic cooperation was in order, for it would provide the foundation for the success of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

14. As to the transfer of technology, the developing world had been the grateful recipient of the products of the ingenuity, industriousness and creativity of the developed world, but at the same time it had been the unwary and horrified recipient of technologies discarded by the developed world because they damaged the environment. The time had come to think in terms of transfers that were beneficial from the standpoint of health, and his delegation hoped that at its next session the Preparatory Committee for the Conference would finalize the necessary parameters for that purpose.

15. With regard to climate change, considerable emphasis was placed on data that sought to transfer responsibility for emissions of greenhouse gases, when it was abundantly clear that the environment was harmed by excessive, not normal, emissions. Similarly, it was claimed that while biodiversity was a global issue, the availability of the biotechnologies it produced should be limited. His delegation urged the abandonment of such one-sided theses in order to permit the global dialogue on environment and development to yield concrete results.

16. In the discussions leading up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and a framework convention on climate change, or any other such instruments, it was necessary to study the foundations on which it was proposed to establish global cooperation. The planet could not be safe if some of its inhabitants lived in poverty, nor could there be sustainable development without resources and technology. General Assembly resolution 44/228 remained the international community's most important expression of its commitment to work together to preserve the planet; it was now time to further those objectives through a joint effort, nurtured by common concerns and galvanized by the common strengths of nations.

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17. Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia) said that his delegation hoped that all delegations participating in the Second Committee's deliberations on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and on the protection of the global climate would do everything possible to ensure progress in the negotiations on those issues. His delegation had had the impression at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference that the countries of the North had come only to listen to the proposals of the countries of the South, but not to state their views explicitly or adopt any decisions on the world's problems in the field of environment and development. During both the preparatory meetings for the Conference and the negotiations on climate change and biological diversity, it had been amply demonstrated that all the issues related essentially to problems between the North and the South. Furthermore, the close link between environment and economic development was becoming increasingly more obvious. The Conference to be held at Rio de Janeiro represented an attempt to correct the oversights of the 1972 Stockholm Conference by incorporating development and environment issues in a joint agenda to resolve what were two aspects of the same problem. The countries of both the North and the South had accepted that concept, which had been clearly enunciated in General Assembly resolution 44/228. The essence of that resolution was that the developing countries must respond positively on environmental issues, while the developed countries must help to resolve development issues, whose solution was essential to promote the sustainable economic growth of the developing countries.

18. Nevertheless, it seemed to his delegation that as the negotiations proceeded, the original compact was being deliberately blurred. There had been too many instances of retreat that could be interpreted as a dilution of commitments. Thus far the development dimension had not elicited any categorical response from the developed countries. On the other hand, the developing countries had come under substantial pressure, governmental as well as non-governmental. The developing countries had little influence on the course of events, for example, in the trade negotiations of GATT, which affected 85 per cent of the total volume of world trade. Yet the pressures mounted, on military spending, national programmes and population control programmes. In the case of UNCED, the pressures were evident in regard to issues such as forestry, the preservation of biological diversity and population, without any corresponding response on how to solve problems relating to markets and the international economic environment, compensatory financing or access to technology. The stock answer was that those issues were being dealt with in other forums or, in the case of technology, that it was a matter for consideration by the private sector. If the South did not rapidly adopt a position on that issue, the Rio de Janeiro Conference would take up only corrective measures which the South must adopt to clean up the global environment. However, the pollution and degradation of the environment were primarily the result of the unsustainable policies and unrestricted consumption patterns of the counries of the North. It was fitting to ask how the South could mount pressure on the North to take corrective measures.

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(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

19. While the 1970s had been marked by a series of national initiatives to address environmental problems, the 1980s had witnessed increasing global awareness about those problems. In the 1990s, it would be possible to carry out a comprehensive rescue plan for the global environment and to promote international cooperation. Protection of the environment required a comprehensive set of measures, including protective measures for damage prevention and control, restorative measures and measures for the development of environmentally sound and energy-efficient technologies, as well as measures to promote environmental awareness. There was also an urgent need to develop capabilities for responding promptly to environmental disasters and to forestall such occurrences through the constant monitoring of the environment. Rapid advances in technology had opened up new possibilities for understanding and meeting the environmental challenge. Public concern about environmental issues and measures to remedy them was constantly growing. In recent years, an increasing number of heads of State and Government, economic and political organizations and experts had begun to address environmental concerns.

20. The report on global economics and environment, prepared under the auspices of the Council of Foreign Relations, referred to the global bargain between developed and developing nations that could emerge from the Conference and subsequent negotiations. The report considered that the developing countries could promise to address the population question with new determination and sharply curtail deforestation and other environmentally destructive practices. In exchange, the countries of the North would reduce atmospheric pollution in order to achieve overall greenhouse stability even as developing countries increased their emissions enough to advance their growth rates. In addition, the North would have to provide assistance to alleviate the problems of debt, trade and investment facing the countries of the South. It was clear that, at the current stage of preparations for the Conference, the principal issue was to determine to what extent the North was prepared to provide assistance. The major industrialized countries continued to adopt contradictory decisions on those issues. In order to ensure the success of the Conference, the Preparatory Committee would have to address all the critical issues, including the negotiations on climate change and biological diversity on which the Earth Charter and Agenda 21 would be based. In that regard, the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, which would be held in New York in March 1992, would be of paramount importance. His delegation did not believe that all the issues could be resolved at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee. Many other issues would have to be dealt with between the fourth session and the Conference. His delegation noted with interest the initiative taken by Japan to convene a meeting on financing in April 1992. Malaysia was taking the necessary steps to hold, in April 1992, a conference on environment and development at the ministerial level similar to one that had been held in Beijing in June 1991.

21. Mr. SHCHERBAK (Ukraine) said that, in a famous photograph of the Earth taken from outer space, the planet looked like a shining pearl. That photograph did not reveal the frontiers that divided countries. The Earth

(Mr. Shcherbak, Ukraine)

seemed to be a perfect creation. However, everyone knew that the planet was ill. In order to save it, it was necessary to halt the flagrant violations of the ecological balance, which were the result of developed civilization.

22. His delegation was pleased that humanity had become aware of the need to preserve the environment. The global nature of environmental problems required the concerted action of all countries, irrespective of their economic and social systems and level of development. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development would help strengthen multilateral cooperation to solve the world's critical environmental problems. Ukraine would participate actively at the Conference and, in that regard, it had prepared a report on the grave state of the environment in Ukraine. His delegation attached great importance to the preparation of the Earth Charter, which would constitute a global strategy for cooperation to preserve the environment. The adoption of the Charter, which would contain the basic rules of environmental conduct, would be one of the most important results of the Conference.

23. The Preparatory Committee of the Conference should take great care in preparing Agenda 21. Likewise, the documents to be prepared for the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee should not only be informative but should also contain sound and balanced recommendations that could be included in Agenda 21. The Conference should not only focus on global and environmental problems but should also consider the special problems of each region and country.

24. Ukraine had suffered for decades from the colonialist exploitation of its natural resources by the central authorities of the former Soviet Union. Ukraine, which accounted for 3 per cent of the territory of the Soviet Union, had provided 50 per cent of the country's iron ore, 25 per cent of its coal and a significant amount of its agricultural products. For decades, Ukraine had suffered from the overexploitation of its resources, which had caused great damage to its environment. Millions of Ukrainians had suffered the consequences of that process. The state of health in Ukraine had deteriorated and mortality and morbidity had increased. For the first time in the history of Ukraine, in 1991 there had been more deaths than births. That situation had prompted the Ukrainian Parliament to declare Ukraine an ecological disaster area. Every year in Ukraine, 17.5 million tons of pollutants and toxic substances were emitted into the atmosphere. The water of Ukraine was also polluted, and the drinking water supply had become a serious problem. Formerly fertile lands were polluted by more than 100 million tons of pesticides, chemical products and other pollutants. Moreover, an even more tragic event for Ukraine had been the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. The long-term effects of that grave accident were not yet known. Chernobyl was a global problem that affected millions of people. It was therefore not surprising that the international community had taken measures to deal with that problem and that the General Assembly had adopted resolution 45/190 on international cooperation to address and mitigate the consequences of the accident, or that the issue was being considered by the General Assembly at its current session.

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(Mr. Shcherbak, Ukraine)

25. The Preparatory Committee should consider the problem of Chernobyl. The Chernobyl disaster should serve as a warning to future generations that nuclear energy should not be used without reliable technology, and that humanity could destroy life on earth without even making use of nuclear weapons.

26. The Conference should conclude global conventions on climate change, biological diversity and forests. In order to do so, it was necessary to speed up the negotiations currently in progress. The final document of the Conference should include such issues as technological and scientific cooperation to protect the environment. A global strategy and coordinating mechanism should be established in order to achieve environmental security and ensure the use of environmentally sound technologies. In that regard, the Preparatory Committee should consider the possibility of establishing global and regional scientific centres and data banks for the exchange of sound technologies. The Conference should adopt its decisions by consensus, since that would guarantee the successful outcome of its work and would be the starting-point for ensuring a sound environmental future for the earth. With respect to the protection of the global climate for current and future generations, Ukraine attached great importance to the work on climate change being carried out by the United Nations.

27. The World Climate Conference, held in 1979, and the Eighth World Meteorological Congress, which had adopted the World Climate Programme, were important events for the international community.

28. It should be recalled that, in its resolution 45/212, the General Assembly had shown that the international community universally recognized the complexity of the measures that needed to be taken in order to reduce the adverse consequences of climate change and global warming to a minimum.

29. At the present time, the task of preparing a framework convention on climate change was of major importance. To achieve that goal, scientific and juridical knowledge were required in order to move away from haphazard development towards a process with well-defined objectives, which included precautionary measures related to the economy, as well as on-site inspections and appropriate technology.

30. In preparing the framework convention, the international community should take as its point of departure the premise that the climate issue was related to many other factors, in particular the balance between the earth, the sea and the atmosphere, as well as the interaction between man's productive activities and nature, including the use of natural resources. The relationship between man and nature should be the main concern in order to reconcile economic development with preservation of the environment. Ukraine would do everything within its power to cooperate with the international community in that area.

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31. Ms. TIMPSON (Deputy Assistant Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) said that, as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) drew closer, there were concrete signs that it would be successful. The enormous groundswell of public opinion in defence of the earth was most encouraging. The growth of "green" movements around the world, coinciding with the end of the cold war, portended a global consciousness that the most important struggle was for sustainable development. New environmental non-governmental organizations were springing up and thousands of such groups would be represented at the forum for non-governmental organizations, which would be held at Rio de Janeiro parallel to UNCED.

32. From its vantage point in the field, UNDP had seen tremendous activity at the national level. Over 75 countries had submitted national reports on the environment to the UNCED secretariat; about 30 countries had progressed to the stage of concrete environmental action plans and strategies; and there were Ministers of the Environment in 136 countries.

33. Environmental issues transcended national boundaries and required supranational solidarity. Latin America and the Caribbean had produced the document entitled "Our Own Agenda"; regional environment and development strategies were being developed in Asia and Africa; the Arab States and Europe were launching a centre for environment and development; and donor Governments had made funding available to the Global Environment Facility for projects aimed at reducing the threats to climate, biodiversity, the ozone layer and international waters. UNDP was co-managing the Facility together with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank. UNDP was also an active supporter of many other initiatives, thanks in large part to special contributions from Japan, Norway, Sweden and the United States of America. In many instances, UNDP was promoting the involvement of the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

34. The preparations for the Conference were already bringing about major changes in the perception of the problem. More than ever, people thought of the environment in a global context and there was deeper understanding of the inextricable links between development and the environment. It was now known that the only way for poorer countries to address environmental issues was through the development process. It should be borne in mind that over a billion people lived in absolute poverty, that 40 per cent of the world's population faced constraints due to lack of water, that 400 million people, half of them children, were severely undernourished and that environmental conditions for those people were deteriorating radically owing to the pressures which they were forced to put on natural resources in order to survive. Naturally, in the face of those daily survival issues, longer-term crises, such as climate change and global warming, which ranked high on the agenda of the industrialized countries, appeared less urgent. However, both in the North and in the South, current needs were being satisfied by exhausting the resources which would be needed by future generations.

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(Ms. Timpson)

35. While UNDP accepted as natural the fact that the countries of the North and South might have differing perspectives, it also maintained that there were more areas of converging interests than there were of opposition. The role of UNDP was that of a builder of bridges on which cooperation could be forged between North and South, between developing countries, between Governments and non-governmental groups, between central authorities and local governments, and between powerful groups and minorities who had no voice.

36. In preparing for UNCED, the two issues of funding and the transfer of technology were of key importance. But behind those issues was another question of equal importance: the need to strengthen indigenous capacity to deal with environment and development issues. For sustainable development to have a chance, countries must be able to absorb and adapt techologies or to develop their own. They must be able to identify and build on traditional systems which were sustainable. At the same time, they must be aware of the environmental implications of their actions and be able to adopt alternative practices where necessary.

37. It was time to move beyond abstract discussions about technology and funding and to proceed more pragmatically to define the specific needs of a more sustainable development. The international community should ask what it would take to develop sustainable agriculture; to build cities that would not add to environmental pollution, and to develop industries in an ecologically benign way. UNDP had initiated such efforts in collaboration with the countries which it served and it hoped to be able to present some initial findings in time for the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference.

38. When it became clearer what precisely would be required, the mechanisms for funding, for the development of appropriate technology and for capacity-building should become more apparent. It should be possible to channel the money and scientific talents that had previously been used in creating armaments into productive technology which would be ecologically sound.

39. Now that the super-Power confrontation was ending, a new concept of global survival was emerging in its place. It was necessary to promote biodiversity, reforestation and soil protection with a view to generating new sources of income, enhanced food production and a better quality of life.

40. However, there remained little time. The transition to sustainable lifestyles in the North and sustainable development in the South must take place over the next 10 to 15 years. If it did not, the damage to the world to be inherited by future generations might be irreparable.

41. There was need to create a compact for a new world with contributions from all sides. The Conference should be used as an opportunity to unify and mobilize countries in a continuing effort to forge that compact. The fourth session of the Preparatory Committee was the forum in which the task of defining specific needs could begin.

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42. Mr. KJELLEN (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the United Nations Conference on Human Environment, which had been held in Stockholm nearly 20 years earlier, had been a breakthrough for world-wide environmental cooperation and the linking of environment to development. With the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, in 1987, sustainable development had become an issue at the top of the international agenda. As a result, the Rio de Janeiro Conference would examine the two integrated issues of environment and development.

43. UNCED should demonstrate how environmental concerns in all countries could be integrated into economic and sectoral policies at all levels in order to secure sustainable development and thus prevent environmental degradation. Energy policies needed to be revised in order to satisfy energy needs and to safeguard the environment. Forestry and industrial policies also needed to be revised to ensure that while industrial development was promoted, pollution from industry was reduced. Agricultural policies, for their part, should be designed to ensure food security and, at the same time, counter soil degradation.

44. The Conference should focus on poverty-related environmental problems in order to alleviate poverty and safeguard the environment. In the area of soil degradation, there was a need for farming policies and methods that sustained the long-term livelihood of farmers and prevented land degradation and desertification. Likewise, there was a need for integrated approaches in coastal areas and much more efficient use of scarce fresh water resources in order to satisfy all needs, including safe water and sanitation in poor housing areas. Furthermore, the environmental and health problems associated with rapid population growth and urbanization, particularly in developing countries, had to be addressed. The fourth session of the Preparatory Committee should give particular attention to those problems. In that connection, it was important to promote local initiatives and participation.

45. Countries which enjoyed a high standard of living had to demonstrate that they could significantly reduce the burden which they imposed on the environment. Industrialized countries, for example, had to stabilize and reduce their carbon dioxide emissions by combining energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources on the basis of rapid technological development and cost-effective methods. In the transport sector, which was of key importance, it was necessary to satisfy needs and minimize the negative impact on the environment. Sweden had proposed the convening of a special United Nations conference on transport and the environment within the framework of Agenda 21. It was hoped that that issue would be given further consideration at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee.

46. Economic relations between industrialized and developing countries also had to be addressed, particularly with regard to trade, debt, and the transfer of financial resources and environmentally sound technologies. He hoped that the outcome of the Uruguay Round would pave the way for increased trade to benefit all countries and, in particular, for greater access for products from

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(Mr. Kjellen, Sweden)

developing countries to the markets of industrialized countries. Current discussions on debt alleviation for the poorest countries within the framework of the Paris Club should lead to an agreement on debt reduction, which was urgently needed. The question of the transfer of financial resources and environmentally sound technologies should be viewed within the broader context of the resources needed to implement the measures set forth in Agenda 21.

47. There were expectations that the developing countries would contribute to the solution of global environmental problems, for which they had little responsibility. At the same time, they needed to adjust their policies and priorities and mobilize increased resources to solve their own environmental problems. Developing countries clearly needed to be assisted by industrialized countries through ongoing development assistance and the transfer of new and additional financial resources. In that regard, he expressed regret that the vast majority of the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) had not reached the United Nations ODA target of 0.7 per cent of GNP.

48. An improved Global Environmental Facility could play an important role because it was a joint effort between the World Bank, UNDP and UNEP, even if the roles of those three organizations had to be further defined. The Facility, which had already attracted considerable support from the donor community, could serve as the financial instrument for international conventions. The possibility of extending it to other areas could be explored.

49. Other arrangements for transferring new and additional financial resources to developing countries and increased exchanges of debt for natural resources were being discussed. Many countries had not yet finalized their positions with regard to the financial issues, although those were matters of the greatest urgency, and considerable progress would have to be made at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee.

50. With regard to the institutional field, all relevant organizations of the United Nations system had to deal with environment and development in an integrated way within their spheres of competence, which had to be reflected in their programmes and budgets. There was a clear need to strengthen the system as a whole with regard to issues pertaining to sustainable development. At the intergovernmental level, the strengthening of the UNEP Governing Council would make it possible to deal with such integration from an environmental point of view. At a higher United Nations level, intergovernmental deliberations on the integration of all economic and social development factors had to take environmental factors much more into account and that should be reflected in the institutional arrangements agreed upon, possibly involving the Economic and Social Council. At the inter-agency level, proper arrangements for intensified cooperation and coordination were also needed in order to ensure full integration of environment and development.

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(Mr. Kjellen, Sweden)

51. The protection of the global climate for current and future generations was an issue relating to environment and development. The effects of climate change might impede development, and measures to limit climate change would have a considerable bearing on government policies. Efforts should be stepped up to finalize the framework convention on climate change so that it would be ready for the Rio Conference. The convention should provide for strict commitments, cost-effective measures and efficient machinery for ensuring implementation. The political declaration on the stabilization of carbon dioxide emissions and other greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol should become legally binding. The convention should also address the question of conservation of ecosystems, including forests.

52. The negotiations on a convention on biological diversity had likewise adopted the proper developmental approach. Biological diversity could be preserved only through careful use of biological resources for development. In view of the very extensive preparatory work, the negotiations should move forward more vigorously.

53. The sixteenth session of the UNEP Governing Council clearly demonstrated that the Programme was committed to integrating environment and development. In that regard, he referred to the decisions on desertification, the protection and development of the oceans and coastal areas, the possible adverse effects of a rise in sealevel, the transfer of environmentally sound industrial production technology and steps to integrate environment and development into the programme of UNEP. The Nordic countries urged the Programme to increase its contribution to the preparatory process for the Rio Conference and noted with satisfaction that UNEP was continuing to carry out its original mandate as well as many programmes of increasing importance.

54. So far, the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had been relatively satisfactory. His delegation also appreciated the contributions by non-governmental organizations, whose active participation in the preparatory process and the Conference itself should be further promoted. There were only six months until the Conference and it was necessary to be realistic about the complexity of the issues. Not everything could be solved in Rio de Janeiro. The negotiating objectives should be defined so that the results justified the efforts made.

55. A new era of concrete negotiations, which would be a central feature of international life, had begun. The following results were expected from the Rio Conference: (a) an Earth Charter that spelled out fundamental guiding principles in the field of environment and development; (b) effective conventions on climate change and biological diversity; (c) guiding principles on forestry which could serve as a basis for negotiations on a convention on forests; (d) an Agenda 21 with clearly defined objectives, activities, timetables, responsibilities and effective means of implementation, including the transfer of financial resources and environmentally sound technologies; (e) institutional recommendations that ensured effective and coordinated national and international follow-up to the Conference.

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56. Mr. AMAZIANE (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Arab Maghreb Union, said that environment had become a priority issue for the international community and the United Nations system. The magnitude of the threats to the ecosystem required concerted global action. In order to avoid global warming and its disastrous effects, the greenhouse effect, climate change and the depletion of the ozone layer must be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Every year, millions of hectares lost their biological diversity, desertification threatened two fifths of Africa, Asia and Latin America, and forests were disappearing at a rate of 15 million hectares a year. At that rate, by the year 2000, 40 per cent of the developing countries' forests would have disappeared.

57. Water problems were of great concern to all countries: the water table was being depleted and groundwater and surface water were polluted by all kinds of waste. The deterioration of marine resources was due to unsound exploitation and pollution that was attributable, in particular, to the developed countries. It was therefore necessary to increase cooperation to protect the oceans, including such enclosed seas as the Mediterranean, and to ensure their rational use.

58. Everyone recognized that environmental problems were due to the pattern of production and consumption in industrialized countries. Those countries produced 90 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as hazardous wastes, which they exported to the developing countries. In the developing countries, endemic poverty, population growth and a lack of financial and technical resources were major causes of environmental degradation.

59. Consequently, the entire international community should be responsible for environmental protection, although distinctions should be made in accordance with each country's level of development. In applying the concept of environmentally sound development, it was necessary to bear in mind the relationship between environment and development. The development model of the consumer society was not viable because of the damage it caused to the environment. The North should seek systems that guaranteed a decent life to citizens integrated into the natural environment. With the support of the international community, the South, should tackle the problem of poverty and control population growth by adopting policies that made maximum use of resources, in particular, human resources, and especially women.

60. The countries members of the Arab Maghreb Union reaffirmed the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/228 regarding the need for a supportive international economic climate, a free multilateral trading system and the reduction of the external debt of the developing countries. They also reaffirmed the provision of General Assembly resolution 45/210, according to which environmental protection activities should not serve as a pretext for creating unjustified barriers to trade.

61. East-West détente could help make the concept of disarmament for development a reality and channel resources towards activities that generated employment and wealth, especially in the developing countries, which would strengthen international concord.

(Mr. Amaziane, Morocco)

62. With respect to the question of desertification and drought, the countries of the Maghreb had established a working group on the environment and water resources. The Maghreb strategy to combat desertification should also be mentioned. For many African countries, desertification was an environmental problem as well as a problem of economic and social development. Development programmes for affected regions should therefore include measures to combat desertification and drought. Initiatives to mitigate the effects of drought on development and fragile ecosystems would be successful only if an approach was adopted that emphasized the need to adapt behaviour and development processes to the conditions imposed by the natural environment.

63. Drought and desertification were threats that went beyond the frontiers of the affected countries and were becoming a global problem that could be arrested only through the concerted efforts of the entire international community. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union welcomed the priority that had been given to that problem in General Assembly resolution 44/228. Morocco had been a sponsor of Assembly resolution 44/172, entitled "Plan of Action to Combat Desertification", in which the Assembly invited the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to deploy all means necessary to halt and reverse the process of desertification which hindered the economic growth and development of the affected countries.

64. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested that studies should be undertaken in order to enable the Preparatory Committee to submit to the Conference a coherent strategy to combat desertification and drought. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union hoped that those studies would be submitted to the Preparatory Committee at its fourth session.

65. With regard to item 78, the countries of the Arab Maghreb Union reaffirmed General Assembly resolution 44/228 and encouraged the international community to implement it. At its previous sessions, the Preparatory Committee had not achieved tangible results, and he welcomed the decision to devote the last session to negotiations on the agenda. The Preparatory Committee should devote an adequate amount of time to intersectoral matters so that a satisfactory agreement could be reached. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union were prepared to consider the adoption of Agenda 21 proposed by the Secretary-General of the Conference, and hoped that their concerns would be borne in mind when the Earth Charter was considered. However, doubts about certain provisions of Assembly resolution 44/228, especially the provision contained in paragraph 15 regarding additional financial resources and developing countries' access to environmentally sound technologies, could hinder the process.

66. With regard to item 79, the countries of the Arab Maghreb Union considered that the framework convention on climate change should take account of the "polluter pays" principle. It would be useful to establish a mechanism to define the responsibilities of countries in that area depending on the

(Mr. Amaziane, Morocco)

threat that they posed to the atmosphere and on the basis of an annual assessment of current levels of greenhouse gases and gases that damaged the ozone layer. He accepted the idea that, by the year 2000, the developed countries should stabilize harmful gas emissions at 1990 levels. It was currently impossible to set a precise goal for the reduction of such emissions; that would have to be done as new information became available.

67. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union supported the establishment of another fund, that was not the global environment fund, to finance the additional costs that developing countries would incur by carrying out measures to mitigate climate change. The countries of the Union considered that the framework convention on climate change should allow developing countries to increase their energy consumption depending on their growth needs, paying special attention to those countries whose economies depended on the use of fossil fuels.

68. He reaffirmed the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/228, according to which the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development should identify ways and means of providing new and additional financial resources to developing countries that would enable them to finance their environment programmes, and should consider ways of transferring technology on concessional terms. The framework convention should also take account of the special situations of island developing countries, the least developed countries and countries affected by desertification and drought.

69. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union considered that the success of the Conference would depend on the achievement of consensus on issues of vital importance to the developing countries, namely additional financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies on concessional terms. They also considered that the emergence of a global consensus on global environmental problems demonstrated that solidarity among nations could help avoid what would otherwise be an inexorable fate. If that willingness to safeguard the world's common heritage resulted in equitable agreements, the same method could be used to resolve other global problems of a political, social or economic nature.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.